

Mahan at West Point, “Gallic Bias,” and the “Old Army”: The Subconscious of Leadership at Gettysburg

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“In my dreams I hear again the crash of guns, the rattle of
musketry, the strange, mournful mutter of the battlefield. But in
the evening of my memory, always I come back to West Point.”
Douglas MacArthur

“...Napoleon stands unrivalled.”
Dennis Hart Mahan

“God and the soldier we like adore,
In time of danger, not before.
The danger past and all things righted,
God is forgotten, the soldier slighted.”
Thomas Jordan

Introduction

What follows is not a discussion of the direct results of leadership on the Battle of Gettysburg. That subject is one of the most widely and deeply covered in all of American and world history. This paper is rather an examination of the subtle impact on the battle caused by the background of the highest-ranking leaders on the field. In a sense, it is a look at the *subconscious* of the leadership on the field.

The Battle of Gettysburg, and with it the entire American Civil War, was in one sense, *not* a fight between slave and free, states' rights and central federal, industrial and agrarian, north and south, "Johnny Reb" and "Billy Yank," or the overdone cliché "brother against brother." Rather, it was a fight at the highest command level between men with virtually identical backgrounds.

That background consisted of four or five years attending the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. There at least a year was spent in the classroom of Dennis Hart Mahan, Professor of Civil and Military Engineering and the Art (or Science) of War. After graduation these men served together as a band of brothers in the U.S. Army, or the "Old Army" as it was known, in the Mexican War, the Indian wars, and the drudgery of peacetime garrison duty.

It is my contention that this almost uniform background played an important role in the conduct of all Civil War battles, including the Battle of Gettysburg.

Retired U.S. army colonel James L. Morrison, in his classic study of the pre-Civil War U.S. Military Academy at West Point, *The Best School in the World: West Point, the Pre-Civil War Years, 1833-1866*, states:

Another long-lived myth is the claim that Professor [Dennis Hart] Mahan's emphasis on [French General Antoine Henri] Jomini became a dominating influence on Civil War strategy. ... This view not only exaggerates the impact of one small segment of the curriculum, while ignoring the effects of other characteristics of the West Point environment, it also overlooks such factors as differences in intellect and the influence of military experience after graduation.¹

I have the utmost respect for Colonel Morrison as an historian. It is my intent, however, to disagree with the first half of his above statement, and to agree with and reinforce the latter half. West Point professor Dennis Hart Mahan *was* in fact a profound influence on the leaders of the American Civil War, and thus the Battle of Gettysburg.

Of course, it was not so much Mahan himself who provided the influence. It was his emphasis at West Point on Napoleon, taught through the vehicle of Jomini's *Summary of the Art of War*, that affected the thinking of future commanders. The military academy itself also played its part, and I will discuss this briefly. There are a number of excellent studies of the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), including Morrison's, that examine this in depth.

There were other factors that shaped the high-ranking commanders of the war, as Morrison correctly points out. Their post-West Point service in the pre-Civil War U.S. army (the "Old Army") was just as important a factor in molding the leaders who commanded at Gettysburg. That period, when Confederate and Union officers alike wore U.S. army blue, will be discussed in the last portion of this essay.

My thesis concerning Mahan has sheer numbers on its side. Twenty-five of the top twenty-seven highest-ranking commanders or staff officers at the beginning of the Battle of Gettysburg were West Point graduates (93 percent). This list includes both army commanders and ten of eleven corps commanders on both sides. It also takes into account the ten Confederate division

commanders and chief of artillery in the Army of Northern Virginia, and the Army of the Potomac's chief of artillery and engineers as well as the artillery reserve commander. (The two non-West Pointers were Confederate division commander Robert Rodes, a Virginia Military Institute graduate, and Union corps commander Dan Sickles, the only non-West Pointer commanding an army corps.)²

The high percentage (90 percent and above) of West Point graduates in the top leadership positions holds true on almost every Civil War battlefield. The Battle of Gettysburg and the entire war, in the end, was a conflict at the highest command level between men who had received identical indoctrination and education at the same academy, and who had subsequently served together in the same small U.S. army.

Of these twenty-five West Pointers, all but two, William Pendleton (USMA 1830) and Robert E. Lee (USMA 1829), studied directly under Mahan for their entire first-class (senior) year at the academy. In that final year every cadet was required to pass Mahan's course, "Military and Civil Engineering and the Science (Art) of War," which the professor taught from 1830 until his death in 1871.³

Lee, it should be added, was superintendent at West Point for three years (1852-55) while Mahan was there and was intimately familiar with the professor's doctrines and teaching. He could not have escaped Mahan's influence. In fact, when Lieutenant Colonel Lee testified in front of the 1860 Davis Commission on the U.S. Military Academy, most of his testimony directly mirrored Mahan's philosophies.⁴

So how could this now-obscure man, Dennis Hart Mahan, *not* have had an effect on the strategy and tactics of any Civil War battle, including Gettysburg? The answer is that he did.

There is no doubt in my mind that at this point some people reading this are asking themselves, "Who in the heck is this guy Mahan?" In my fifteen years as a licensed battlefield guide at the Gettysburg National Military Park, I have mentioned Mahan's name hundreds of times, particularly when I guide active-duty military units who visit the field to study leadership and tactics. Sometimes I go as far as to point out that one of the greatest influences on the conduct of the Civil War was not Lincoln, Davis, Lee, Grant, or Sherman, but Mahan. Invariably the reaction is that of glazed, blank stares.

All of the leaders at Gettysburg, as simple human nature dictates, were products of their education and life experiences. Professor Mahan was a primary educator and "experience" of almost all of the men who made the decisions that would mean life or death, victory or defeat on that legendary field of battle.

"Old Cobbon Sense"

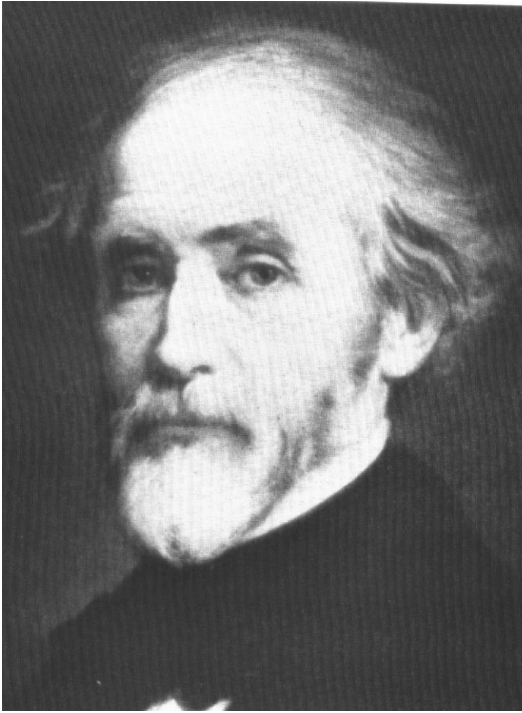
Dennis Hart Mahan's parents were Irish immigrants, and the future professor was born on April 2, 1802 in the city where a large number of Irish settled, New York. The family moved south to Norfolk, Virginia a year later, and Dennis' father, John, took a job as a contractor. Dennis' mother and first stepmother died before he was six, but the young Mahan did become quite close with his second stepmother, Esther.⁵

Mahan loved drawing. He learned that the U.S. Military Academy at West Point was the preeminent engineering school in the country, and that drawing was a major part of the curriculum. In fact, except for Norwich University and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, there was no other place except West Point to study engineering. Mahan applied for and was granted an appointment to the academy in 1820 aided in part by his friendship with senior U.S. Congressman Thomas Newton and the prominent Richmond physician, Robert Archer.⁶

Four years later Mahan graduated at the top of his class of thirty-one cadets, coming to the attention of the legendary superintendent, Sylvanus Thayer, the man who virtually created the pre-Civil War academy. Mahan's academic prowess was so great that he actually became an instructor of mathematics in 1821 while only a third-classman (sophomore). His fellow cadets,

and perhaps his students, included future Civil War generals John H. Winder, Joseph Mansfield, David Hunter, Isaac R. Trimble, George A. McCall, George Sears Greene, Benjamin Huger, Robert Anderson, C.F. Smith, A.S. Johnston, Samuel P. Heintzelman, Silas Casey, Napoleon Buford, Leonidas Polk, and Philip St. George Cooke. Another of Mahan's classmates was Robert Parrott, whose name would become legendary because of his development of the Civil War mainstay, the Parrott cannon.⁷

Only academically superior cadets could be appointed to the Corps of Engineers. Upon graduation in 1824, Mahan was the only man in his class commissioned a second lieutenant of engineers. Instead of being sent into the field, Mahan spent two years as an assistant professor of mathematics and engineering at the academy. Incidentally, Robert E. Lee entered the academy in 1825.



Dennis Hart Mahan. USMA Special Collections.

Mahan was a tiny man whose weight hovered around 100 pounds. Poor health constantly plagued him, and in 1826 he developed a pulmonary condition that caused him lifelong problems. The young professor was granted a year's medical leave to travel to France. While he was there, the War Department extended his one-year leave of absence to three years, at his request. He spent most of this time traveling, attending social functions, and observing both the French culture and military system.⁸

In 1828, Mahan wrote to both Thayer and Secretary of War James Barbour to propose that America send its officers to the various prestigious French military schools for professional development. Mahan's argument was simple and would characterize his attitude for the rest of his life: He felt that France's military system was superior to America's, and that if U.S. officers were exposed to it, the result would vastly improve the U.S. army.⁹

Mahan's proposal was ignored at West Point and in the army. However, his leave was again extended for sixteen more months so that he could

attend the Military School of Application for Engineers and Artillerists at Metz, France. Metz was the greatest fortified city in Europe, in part due to the French engineering genius of Sebastien Vauban, whose seventeenth-century theories made up a considerable portion of the school's curriculum.

Apparently, young Lieutenant Mahan found that his West Point education had prepared him well for Metz, and he easily navigated the academic program. This reinforced Mahan's confidence in and love for his alma mater. He observed educational procedures at Metz, many of which he would bring back to the U.S. Military Academy. The later emphasis at West Point on small classes, mathematics, frequent grading of cadets, and branch selection based on class standing all have roots in Mahan's time at Metz.¹⁰

Mahan's four years in France no doubt played a tremendous part in his later love of fortifications and entrenchments, Napoleon, Jomini, and the French military system. U.S. army colonel Thomas Greiss, whose 1969 Duke University doctoral dissertation stands as the only biography of Dennis Hart Mahan, calls Mahan's attitude "a lifelong Gallic bias."¹¹

It certainly could be argued that Mahan became a dedicated Francophile, setting the stage for the U.S. army's nineteenth-century love affair with the French military system. He later wrote and taught an entire generation of army leaders that their task was, "to systematize, and embody in the form of doctrine, what was then largely traced out."¹²

What was of course "traced out" was the "system" of Napoleon, of whom Mahan stated boldly, "confessedly stands unrivalled." The professor added, "To him [Napoleon] we owe those grand features of the art, by which an enemy is broken and utterly dispersed by one and the same blow."¹³

Ironically, many West Pointers in the Civil War remembered this emphasis on the offensive by their old instructor while ignoring his cautionary follow-up:

... for the attainment of his ends on the battlefield, he [Napoleon] has shown a culpable disregard of the soldiers' blood, and has often pushed to excess his attacks. ... *To do the greatest damage to our enemy with the least exposure to ourselves*, is a military axiom lost sight of only by ignorance of the true ends of victory.¹⁴

That warning is a futuristic vision of the present-day U.S. army maxim: *Accomplish the mission with the least number of friendly casualties*. Had Mahan's full message been more ingrained, it is possible to imagine that the mass slaughter of Antietam, Fredericksburg, Franklin, Cold Harbor, and Gettysburg, could have been averted. Civil War commanders remembered their role model, Napoleon, because of Mahan. Unfortunately, they did not always remember Mahan's caveat.

Napoleon's system of organizing his army into corps that could operate independently had also impressed Mahan. Thirty-one years after Mahan's schooling at Metz, President Lincoln visited West Point and spoke to the aging professor, who advocated organizing the Army of the Potomac into corps. Shortly thereafter, in March 1862, Lincoln vetoed General George B. McClellan's objections to this structure and ordered the army to organize itself into corps. The Army of Northern Virginia followed suit half a year later after the Battle of Antietam, when they formally created army corps.¹⁵

In 1830, upon his return to West Point from France, Mahan assumed the position of acting Professor of Civil and Military Engineering and the Art (later Science) of War, assisting Captain David Douglas, a hero of the War of 1812. After Douglas resigned, Mahan's position was made permanent in 1832, a position he would hold for thirty-nine years until his death in 1871. (Mahan resigned his commission as a second lieutenant of engineers in 1832.)¹⁶

Although never proven, the legend is that upon being informed by the West Point Board of Visitors that he had to retire due to "mental aberration," Mahan chose instead to die in the beloved Hudson River that he had gazed upon for half a century. He apparently committed suicide despite the fact that his former student, President U.S. Grant, had guaranteed that Mahan could stay on active duty. On his way to see a doctor in New York City on a river steamer, Mahan removed his rubber boots and coat, rested his head in his hands as if in pain, then calmly walked over the side to his death.¹⁷

It is interesting to note that Mahan, who had such a great influence on American military thought and leadership during the Mexican and Civil wars, rarely left West Point, never rose above the rank of second lieutenant, and never heard a hostile shot.

The capstone of cadets' education at the academy was their last year spent in a 75-by-22-foot alleyway called the Engineering Room. It was here that Mahan ruled like a god for four decades. Not by any stretch of the imagination a jovial man, the professor was feared and respected rather than loved. He grilled the cadets unmercifully and was brutally sarcastic toward any student who was not prepared for the daily recitals. He was just as hard on anyone committing the cardinal sin of slouching. To the professor, a slouching body was a slouching mind. A chronic nasal

infection caused Mahan's voice to cut like a dull blade through the Engineering Room as he recited his favorite maxim, "Cobbon sense, gentleman, cobbon sense!"¹⁸

As evidence of the professor's caustic demeanor, an 1833 West Point court of inquiry found that, "Professor Mahan has been irritable, sarcastic, and uncourteous in his official intercourse with the First Class ..."¹⁹

Despite his cold exterior, there is no doubt that the professor deeply loved both the academy and the cadets he taught there. It was always Mahan who defended West Point in writing or verbally against its many critics. One cadet remembered that on the last day of class Mahan tried to wish them farewell but became choked with emotion "and could hardly speak."²⁰

Mahan emphasized common sense, or practical reasoning, as one of the three pillars of success for a military leader. He stressed flexibility, although it is obvious that many of his students forgot that lesson during the Civil War. He stated that "no soldier ... will allow himself to be trammelled by any exclusive system." In this Mahan was copying Napoleon, who also cautioned against becoming locked into one specific doctrine. Sadly, many West Pointers did in fact boil down Mahan's teachings and Napoleon's maxims (due mostly to Jomini) into a concrete system, instead of a loose set rules to be used as a guideline.²¹

Secondly, the professor emphasized the study of military history. As he put it:

No one can be said to have thoroughly mastered his art, who has neglected to make himself conversant with its early history, nor ... without some historical knowledge of its rise and progress ... war is both a science and an art, and that profound and varied learning and intimate acquaintance with literature as well as science is indispensable in the formation of the thorough soldier.²²

Finally, Mahan harped on speed of movement in warfare, or celerity, as he preferred to call it. Robert E. Lee certainly used this fundamental in many engagements -- certainly he used celerity in his movements in the Gettysburg campaign between June 3 and July 1, 1863.²³

It must be pointed out that the actual classroom time Mahan spent on tactics in that final cadet year was a paltry -- and perhaps shocking -- nine hours! Some have used this fact to de-emphasize Mahan's Civil War influence.²⁴ John C. Waugh, in his excellent study of one West Point class, *The Class of 1846*, comments that:

Soon there would be the week of military tactics, which seemed all too short considering this was a military academy. In only nine hours of class time they would learn all that West Point intended to teach them about [tactics and strategy]. ... If they were to learn anything else it would have to be somewhere else some other time, very likely on the battlefield. But they had to remember that they were being trained not primarily as warriors, but as engineers.²⁵

This lack of tactical instruction time can be misleading. Professor Mahan used every one of his yearlong engineering classes to discuss military history and tactics, sometimes to the detriment of whatever technical engineering problem was at hand. West Point also adopted a five-year program (instead of four years) for seven years (1854-1861). This extra year gave Mahan much more time to cover tactical subjects.²⁶

It could also be argued that the small amount of time spent on tactics increased the amount of attention the cadets paid to Mahan's instruction. After all, many of these cadets did in fact go to West Point to become warriors, not engineers. So to these young men, their time with Mahan was heavily anticipated and enjoyable. Had they studied tactics and strategy as they did mathematics and engineering, then the military art may have become humdrum.

The scientific, technical, and mathematical elements of West Point's curriculum would always be most important to Mahan. That being so, Mahan, to his everlasting credit, did struggle for

forty years with the rest of the Academic Board at West Point, in an attempt to make tactics and strategy more important in the education of the cadets. He never totally won that war (which some would argue continues today), but without his teachings the cadets would have had much less of a military education. There is evidence that military subjects made a significant gain in the curriculum after 1845 due to Mahan's efforts.²⁷

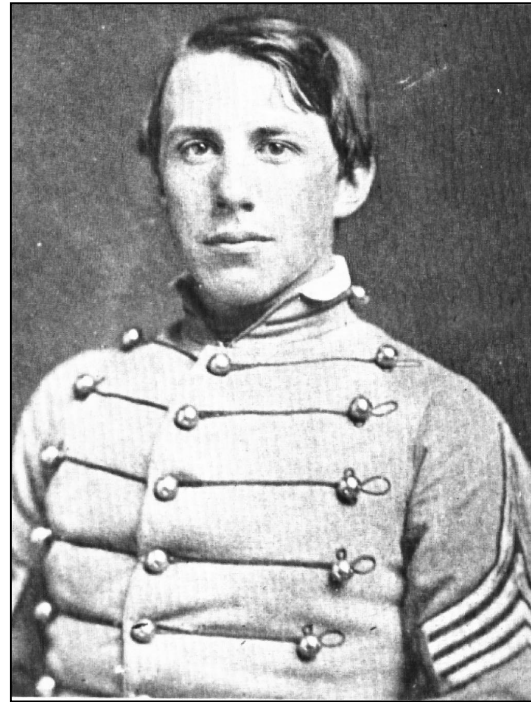
Another of Mahan's valuable contributions was his one-man crusade to increase the number of military books and texts in the academy's library -- including writing some of them himself. It was due to his efforts that the library was restored after the disastrous fire of 1838 that destroyed many of the records and texts at the academy.²⁸

Mahan was also the chairman and chief critic of West Point's "Napoleon Club." Founded in the late 1840s, this club met a few times a month to discuss the campaigns of Bonaparte. Cadre and even a few cadets participated. Fire destroyed the records of this club, so it is hard to document who participated. Those we know of are George Thomas, George McClellan, G.W. Smith, William F. Smith, Cadmus Wilcox, John Gibbon, Fitz-John Porter, Kirby Smith, William Franklin, James McPherson, Gustavus Smith, and Thomas Neill.²⁹

Although the club discussed Frederick the Great and other prominent military leaders, Napoleon was its focus. It is difficult to believe that this elevation of Napoleon would not have had a monumental effect on the conduct of the coming war.

For instance, at Waterloo the French were on a ridge a mile across an open valley facing the British and their allies, who had their own ridge. The approximate combined strength of the two armies (not including the Prussians) was 165,000. Napoleon attacked across that valley and failed to dislodge Wellington's army from its position. Similarly, on July 2 and 3 at Gettysburg, the majority of Meade's and Lee's armies were on separate ridges a mile apart. Their combined strength was 164,000. Lee's attacks across mostly open ground failed. The similarities between Waterloo and what would happen at Gettysburg forty-eight years later are hard to ignore.³⁰

The list of commanders in the Battle of Gettysburg who had endured a year under the uncompromising eye of "Old Cobbon Sense" is a long one, containing: James Longstreet, A.P. Hill, Richard S. Ewell, J.E.B. Stuart, Henry Heth, William D. Pender, Richard H. Anderson, Edward Johnson, Jubal Early, George Pickett, Lafayette McLaws, John Bell Hood, Richard Garnett, J.M. Jones, George H. Steuart, Junius Daniel, Stephen Ramseur, Cadmus Wilcox, Fitzhugh Lee, John Chambliss, Beverly Robertson, W.E. Jones, E.P. Alexander, George Meade, John F. Reynolds, Winfield Scott Hancock, George Sykes, John Sedgwick, Oliver Howard, Henry Slocum, Alfred Pleasonton, Henry Hunt, Gouverneur Warren, Robert Ogden Tyler, John Tidball, Abner Doubleday, John Gibbon, Andrew Humphreys, Romeyn Ayres, Albion Howe, John Newton, Horatio Wright, Henry Eustis, Alfred Torbert, Alexander Hays, Hugh Judson Kilpatrick, John Buford, David M. Gregg, Gabriel Paul, Norman Hall, Alexander Webb, Samuel Carroll, Stephen Weed, David Russell, Thomas Ruger, Thomas Neill, Adelbert Ames, George Armstrong Custer, and Wesley Merritt.³¹



Edward P. Alexander as a cadet.
USMA Archives

This list includes virtually every man who made a critical command decision at Gettysburg, down to infantry brigade level. Robert E. Lee was at least indirectly exposed to Mahan's teaching while he was superintendent at West Point. Incidentally, along with Lee, William Pendleton, Isaac Trimble, Sidney Burbank, Hannibal Day, James Barnes, and George Greene also graduated from the academy before the Mahan era began in 1830. Lewis Armistead and John Cleveland Robinson attended but did not graduate.³²

Some have focused on Mahan's eccentricities (e.g., he never went for a walk without an umbrella) in order to dismiss his positive contributions. The fact remains that Mahan was a brilliant intellectual whose written works were both prolific and widely utilized by every U.S. army officer after the Mexican War.³³

Space does not allow me to mention all of Mahan's writings. The two most important are the 1836 *Treatise on Field Fortifications*, which drew heavily on his exposure to Vauban at Metz, and the 1847 *Advanced Guard, Outpost, and Detachment Service of Troops*, known simply as *Outpost*.³⁴

The former was the primary engineering manual for officers on both sides during the Civil War, and the U.S. army well into the twentieth century. The Eastern Theater's final year of trench warfare around Petersburg and Richmond took its tactical fundamentals from *Fortifications*. Lee, Meade, Grant, and Johnston all tried with varying degrees of success to solve the tactical stalemate, not by developing new offensive tactics, but by resorting to the lessons that Mahan had taught them in the Engineering Room decades earlier.

In fact, Mahan, after observing tactical developments in the Crimean War, predicted the trench warfare of 1864 to 1865 in a later revision of *Fortifications*:

The great destruction of life, in open assaults, by columns exposed within so long a range, must give additional value to entrenched fields of battle; and we again see fieldworks play the part they did in the defense of Sevastopol ... the assailant [will] be forced to entrench himself to assail them [the defensive entrenchments]
...³⁵

When it came to the use of fortifications, many Civil War combat leaders had selective memory when recalling Mahan's lessons. He cautioned that a mobile force could render fortifications useless, and that the fortifications could become a trap for the force occupying them.

Is it possible that Lee remembered Mahan's caution when he planned the Gettysburg campaign -- that is, to neutralize the Union's Washington fortifications by maneuvering strategically and fighting tactically offensive battles?

Mahan also warned future combat leaders of the effect of the Minié ball on infantry, artillery, and engineering operations. His warning went unheeded, of course, by a majority of Civil War combat leaders.³⁶

Outpost, however, was a primary combat manual for most officers in the Civil War, and thus had the greatest impact of any of Mahan's written works. The regular army officers, including the West Pointers, were familiar with *Outpost* as a matter of course. The biggest influence of Mahan's book may have been on the tens of thousands of volunteer commanders who were commissioned during the war. Most of these men had no military experience whatsoever. Of the 1,008 full volunteer or regular generals in the war, only 319 (32 percent) were professional military officers before 1861 (255 were lawyers or judges!). For these novices, *Outpost* offered a quick lesson (168 pages in some editions) in tactics.³⁷

It is not my intent to discuss in detail the entire manual, but to give a short synopsis on the portions of *Outpost* that may have affected the Battle of Gettysburg. Lest there be any doubt of the dominance of the French military system on Mahan, one only has to go to page 33 of *Outpost*:

The systems of tactics in use in our service are those of the French; not that opinion is settled among our officers on this point; some preferring the English. In favor of the French, it may be said, that there is really more affinity between the military aptitude of the American and French soldier, than between that of the former and the English; and that the French systems are the results of a broader platform of experience, submitted to the careful analysis of a body of officers, who, for science and skill combined, stand unrivalled ...³⁸

Whether one agrees with Mahan on his assessment of the French, Americans, and English is immaterial. A key source in the education of the leaders at Gettysburg stated that the *French* system was superior.

Today, the Prussian military system, as adopted by the United States, dominates our army (this will be discussed later). The French, on the other hand, are ridiculed because of their poor performance in 1940 and the Indo-China War (an irony considering the American experience in Vietnam a decade later). Americans with short memories have forgotten Napoleon's fifteen-year dominance of European battlefields, and the fact that without French military and political assistance in the Revolutionary War there may not have been a United States today. In addition, the bravery and tenacious fighting ability of the World War One French common soldier, though poorly led by his high command, is a faded memory. The English military system (still quite effective) is dismissed, perhaps, because of Great Britain's decline as a world power and her defeat in the American Revolution.

In 1861, Germany was ten years away from uniting under the Prussian military system, and America was not by any stretch of the imagination a world military power. It was the French system that was seen as the "light and the way," and Mahan had a great deal to do with that attitude.

Outpost makes it clear that the commander of any unit should make sure that his unit is "within reach of his voice." Anyone who questions the shoulder-to-shoulder formations of the war needs to look no further. By following *Outpost* doctrine, any form of "dispersed" small-unit tactics would be out of the question.³⁹

Of course, only 3 percent of the common soldiers at Gettysburg were members of the U.S. army, the other 97 percent being state volunteers, many of whom had received little training prior to going into battle. Many of these volunteers had learned well by July 1863, and there is no questioning the bravery and valor of the majority of these citizen-soldiers.⁴⁰ On the other hand, simple bravery does not create an army of professional soldiers. Thus, with relatively untrained men under their command, and Mahan instructing them to keep these men within vocal range the leaders at Gettysburg, or any Civil War battle, the combat leaders of the Civil War had little tactical flexibility.

Much of *Outpost* is rooted in Antoine Henri Jomini's interpretation of Napoleon. Mahan, as Jomini and Napoleon had before him, emphasized both the strategic and tactical offensive. *Outpost* states, "Carrying the war into the heart of the enemy's country is the surest plan of making him share its burdens and foiling his plans."⁴¹

Certainly that passage reminds us of Lee's reasoning in planning the invasion of Pennsylvania in the summer of 1863. Mahan continues, "If the main body falters in its attack the reserve should advance at once through the intervals, and make a vigorous charge with the bayonet."⁴²

This passage could describe virtually every battle of the war, including Lee's tactics at Gettysburg. It should be noted, however that Mahan does provide a defensive alternative to the direct frontal assaults that some say Jomini and Napoleon relied on.

The chief object of entrenchments is to enable the assailed to meet the enemy with success, by first compelling him to approach under every disadvantage, and

then, when he has been cut up, to assume the offensive, and drive him back at the point of bayonet.⁴³

Mahan emphasized the infantry branch over the cavalry, artillery, and ironically his own branch, the engineers. This does not parallel Napoleon's organization, in which cavalry and artillery held an equal if not greater position than the foot soldiers. Both sides in the Civil War produced armies based on infantry units with cavalry and artillery in a supporting role, a practice which continues to this day. Historically, however, not all armies have been dominated by the infantry.⁴⁴

One might attribute this dominance of infantry to the American tradition of a small standing professional army with a great dependence on volunteer citizen-soldiers. It is by nature more difficult to train cavalymen, artillerymen, and engineers than it is infantrymen. Mahan, of course, was aware of that tradition, but I cannot help but wonder if *Outpost* helped establish the dominance of infantry in the coming war and in future American military doctrine.

Another passage of Mahan's tactical manual is almost a word-for-word copy of Lee's plan of attack for July 2, 1863 at Gettysburg:

The main effort of the assailant is seldom directed against more than one point of the position; that one being usually selected which, if carried, will lead to the most decisive results; as, for example, one of the flanks. ... But the main attack is always combined with demonstrations upon some other point; both with a view of deceiving the assailed as to the real point of attack, and prevent him from withdrawing troops from other points to strengthen the one menaced.⁴⁵

Lee, on the second day of Battle at Gettysburg, gave almost these exact orders to generals Longstreet and Ewell. Longstreet was to make the main attack south to north, guiding on the Emmitsburg road, and strike the Union left along Cemetery Ridge. Simultaneously, Ewell was to demonstrate against the Union right flank on Cemetery and Culp's hills. The reasons why this battle plan did not develop into the battle actually fought are complex and well documented, and I will not discuss them here. But it remains an irrefutable fact that once Longstreet launched his attack on July 2, Meade responded by sending almost his entire army to the southern end of the field. In the north, Ewell's entire Rebel corps, supported by a large portion of A.P. Hill's corps, was opposed only by Greene and Carroll's small brigades and the decimated remnants of the 1st and 11th corps. Ewell and Hill had a two-to-one numbers advantage. A major assault by the Rebels on Cemetery and Culp's hills, instead of a diversion, may have cut through Meade's weakened right like a knife through butter. What could have happened on the Union right that day certainly played as large a role in the outcome of the battle as what did happen in front of the Round Tops.⁴⁶

One of the most controversial "what-ifs?" of the battle is the question of why Lee did not order the all-out assault on the Union defensive position on July 2 that had a reasonably high chance of success. If Lee was following the basic military doctrine outlined in *Outpost*, then at least part of that question may have been answered.

Lee may also have recalled Mahan's emphasis on celerity. *Outpost* places the importance on battle itself and states that maneuver, delay, or lack of will or resolution for battle may be disastrous. Lee's famous statement to Longstreet at Gettysburg, "The enemy is there and it is there we strike him," comes immediately to mind.

Mahan also believed that excellent morale combined with good leadership could overcome superior numbers.⁴⁷ Lee, of course, also believed this as he engaged Meade's army at Gettysburg. The Confederate commander's postscript, "I thought my men were invincible," demonstrates that feeling as well as any detailed analysis.

One more influence Mahan may have had at Gettysburg regarded the use of cavalry. Light cavalry, Mahan felt, was strictly for reconnaissance. And that is exactly how it was used by both sides from the beginning of the war through the Gettysburg campaign. The idea of using cavalry as mobile mounted infantry to carry out assaults did not catch on until the last year of the war. Although the Union cavalry corps was organized as an army corps at Gettysburg, it certainly did not fight as one unit in the battle. The scouting job performed by Union cavalry division commander John Buford was magnificent and is well documented. But it was basically an accomplishment in reconnaissance. The Confederate cavalry division was dispersed to an even greater degree at Gettysburg. In fact, this was in keeping with *Outpost*.⁴⁸

Returning to Colonel Morrison's *The Best School in the World*, the author who initially seems to discount Mahan's influence, gives the professor his due (perhaps subconsciously):

It is true that cadets studied Mahan's *Outpost* in some detail and that the same book served as a popular primer for officers trying to learn their trade during the Civil War. ... That is not to say that the military academy experience had no bearing on the way the war was planned and fought, but to suggest that the influences exerted by the academy worked in a more subtle and complex manner than the inculcation of abstract strategic principles through a brief sub-course [Mahan's].⁴⁹

My comment on this is that a "subtle and complex" effect is still an effect, and an important one at that.

Perhaps Mahan's greatest contribution to American military history was his fanatical insistence that the army's leaders be professional. This sounds obvious today when we do in fact have a professional military. In the nineteenth century the mistrust and hatred of the military and West Point were widespread. One of American biggest folk heroes, Davey Crockett, spent much of his time as a congressman trying to eliminate West Point. For Mahan the hallmark of professionalism was the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He knew that America would never tolerate a large standing peacetime army. This being true, the professionals produced at West Point would carry the load supplemented by a large civilian militia. These professionals would also spread their knowledge among the volunteer officers.

Dennis Hart Mahan's vision was realized in both the Mexican and the Civil wars. His West Point-trained professionals, supplemented by the militia (state volunteers), provided the blueprint for the combat in those wars, including the Battle of Gettysburg.⁵⁰

Jomini

The primary message preached by Mahan was that Napoleon and the French military system provided the fundamentals for future success in war. Mahan believed that after Napoleon, there was nothing else to be learned. In a sense this stood in direct contradiction to his dictum of staying flexible in a tactical situation. Nonetheless, Mahan's understanding of Napoleon, in fact a majority of Americans' understanding of Napoleon, came from Antoine Henri Jomini.

Jomini was born in Switzerland in 1779 and joined the Swiss army, an ally of the French, in 1798. He beat American boy-general George Custer to brigade command by two years, rising to that level by age twenty-one. A military theorist and visionary thinker from the beginning, he had published four books by 1805. These writings impressed both Napoleon Bonaparte and one of his marshals, Michel Ney. Jomini was an aide to Ney in the Austerlitz campaign. He was promoted to colonel in 1806 and joined Napoleon's general staff for the Prussian campaign of 1806-07, where he earned the Legion of Honor.

He served Ney and the Emperor until 1814, when a personality conflict with Napoleon's chief of staff, Berthier, caused Jomini to resign from the French army and join Czar Alexander's

Russian army as a general. Although he never actually fought the French, he was an advisor and confidant to the Russian emperor for two years. Jomini then organized the Russian military staff college in the 1820s and tutored the future czar, Nicholas.

In 1829 he retired to Brussels, Belgium and spent the rest of his long life (he died four years after the American Civil War ended) writing prolifically on military subjects. Jomini went to his grave as one historian noted, “the undisputed expert of the period in the art of war.”⁵¹

Napoleon was critical of Jomini’s early writings on warfare. Much of this was probably due to Jomini’s defection to Russia. Napoleon did later forgive his old comrade, blaming his faults on Jomini’s Swiss heritage.

It was Jomini’s 1838 *Summary of the Art of War*, however, that would cast the longest shadow on both American and European doctrine. This classic was not a required text at the academy until 1859, but Mahan had read it and certainly introduced it to his students from the late 1830s onward.⁵²

It should be added here that Henry W. Halleck was a cadet at West Point when *Art of War* was published, and like Mahan was considered such a prodigy that he was made an assistant professor before graduating in 1839. Halleck was so taken with Jomini that he wrote *The Elements of Military Art and Science* in 1845 (thus Halleck’s sobriquet “Old Brains,” which would be used against him when his combat performance did not match his intellectual capability). Halleck’s book mirrored most of Jomini’s theories and was widely read by pre-Civil War army officers. Halleck himself translated *Art of War* into English in 1864. Thus, cadets at West Point were taught Jomini through both Mahan and Halleck.⁵³

Whatever the source, it could be that Robert E. Lee was following Jomini’s maxim: “Of Wars Defensive Politically, and Offensive in a Military Point of View,” when he planned the Gettysburg campaign. Jomini wrote

A power with no internal dissensions, and under no apprehension of an attack by a third party, will always find it advantageous to carry the war upon hostile soil. This course will spare its territory from devastation, carry on war at the expense of the enemy, excite the ardor of its soldiers, and depress the spirits of the adversary.⁵⁴

That passage was written twenty-five years before Lee decided to take the Civil War out of Virginia and into Pennsylvania. Anyone who has even the most basic understanding of the reasons why the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia decided to invade the north in the summer of 1863 can see the influence of Jomini here. The above passage from *Art of War* is almost a word-for-word copy of the reasons for the Gettysburg campaign that Lee himself outlined in his official reports and later writings.⁵⁵

Jomini, like Napoleon, preached the offensive. One of the most quoted passages from *Art of War* is, “A general who waits for the enemy like an automaton without taking any other part than that of fighting valiantly, will always succumb when he shall be well attacked.”⁵⁶

Art of War also sees maneuver in the face of the enemy as very risky. Lee’s reluctance to follow Longstreet’s advice for a strategic turning movement at Gettysburg might reflect this. To Jomini maneuver should only be used to defeat your enemy totally, not just to occupy territory or strategic points as Mahan advocated.⁵⁷

Jomini’s classic is not a page-turner. His thoughts are complex, difficult to grasp, and not easy to condense into precise form. This is one of the reasons why Prussian General Karl von Clausewitz’s *On War* (published a few years before *Art of War*) is today the Bible to most western armies, including the modern U.S. army. Clausewitz’s primer is a fascinating read. Few American military leaders in 2002 have read Jomini. However, almost all have at least a rudimentary grasp of Clausewitz.

The opposite was true of the military leaders of the Civil War. Almost all of the American commanders of the nineteenth century were familiar with Jomini; very few with the Prussian theorist. For one thing there were very few translations of Clausewitz available in the United States. Also, no one really noticed the Prussians until their stunning victories over Denmark, Austria, and France between 1864 and 1871.

There is an argument among some historians that the “Jomini-bound” McClellan, Beauregard, and Lee were bested during the Civil War by the “Clausewitzians,” Grant and Sherman. This view borders on the absurd, because neither Grant nor Sherman would have been familiar with Clausewitz. Grant later denied being influenced by Jomini despite the fact that he had been a student of Mahan. Sherman, on the other hand, urged his subordinates to study Mahan and Jomini in 1862. Both Grant and Sherman’s campaigns included much that was Jominian in nature.⁵⁸

Jomini preached the importance of the infantry branch and the esprit of armies. This certainly influenced Mahan and the priorities of most high-ranking officers of the Civil War.⁵⁹

The true power of *Art of War* for the leaders at Gettysburg, however, was its *perceived* regimented system for victory in battle. That system preaches massing friendly forces, and then *attacking* and penetrating enemy weak points. In other words, this was a direct approach that if followed as a fixed system guaranteed a bloody battle in every engagement. Certainly Lee and Meade followed this dictum at Gettysburg. Lee massed his force and instead of maneuvering, tried to penetrate Meade’s force at a weak point. Meade spent the three days of battle not trying to maneuver his numerically superior force, but sitting on his haunches, desperately attempting to prevent penetration of his lines.

Jomini did offer the alternative of the tactical “turning maneuver” in battle. Lee attempted this in many battles, including the second day at Gettysburg. Almost all engagements in the war involved either a direct frontal assault, or a tactical turning (flanking) maneuver. Jomini is at least partly responsible for this. Any study of military history shows numerous other methods of attack (deception, night attack, double envelopment, reverse slope position before attacking, infiltration, massed column, etc.). Most commanders from 1861 to 1865 preferred Jomini’s *perceived* solutions to tactical problems.⁶⁰

Art of War emphasizes the use of artillery in the offensive.

[It would be] advantageous to concentrate a very strong artillery mass upon a point where we should wish to direct a decisive effort, to the end of making a breach in the hostile line, which would facilitate the grand attack upon which might depend the success of battle.⁶¹

No better description of Lee’s plan for the Pickett-Pettigrew-Trimble assault of July 3, 1863 exists. It is hard to believe that Jomini did not have a direct effect on Lee’s mindset on that fateful day.

Today, we accept that Gettysburg had to be fought the way that it was. It did not. That does not mean that Lee and Meade were not great battle captains. They most certainly were. But the seeds of the reasons why the battle was fought as it was were sown long before the two armies met at Gettysburg in July of 1863. Jomini’s *Art of War* as taught by Mahan, and to a lesser degree, by Halleck, helped to sow those seeds.

Napoleon: The Real “Ghost of Gettysburg”

For obvious reasons I will not discuss the subject of Napoleon Bonaparte in detail here. I recommend David Chandler’s thousand-page *The Campaigns of Napoleon* for those interested in

that kind of detail. A few points concerning the direct effect of Napoleon on Civil War and Gettysburg commanders should be mentioned, however.

Most obvious was the god-like status that was bestowed on Napoleon by the high-ranking leaders of the war. It was not Alexander, Julius Caesar, Gustavus Adolphus, Frederick the Great, nor even George Washington that these Americans looked to for inspiration. It was Napoleon that dominated both the conscious and subconscious of the Civil War.

Why Napoleon? Why not Wellington, the man who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo? Why not an American? It is not an easy question to answer. I have first-hand experience. I am asked constantly while giving tours or battlefield seminars why it was Napoleon and the French, and not the American colonial army of 1775-81 or even the “guerrilla-fighting” American Indians that provided the model for Civil War armies.

Again, as mentioned earlier, much of this confusion is due to the modern American prejudice against the French army of the last sixty-two years, as well as the ignorant revisionist acceptance that the United States has always been the world’s premiere military power. But the question still remains difficult to answer.

One possible explanation is cultural. To a young American West Pointer between fifteen and twenty-four years of age (McClellan was fifteen and Hancock sixteen when they entered the academy), Napoleonic warfare seemed glorious. The colorful uniforms, the beating drums, the chess-like pageantry of the shoulder-to-shoulder troops, the charisma of Napoleon, all appealed at a gut level to the teenaged cadets. One of the most widely read novels of the nineteenth century was Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*. We know now, due to our experiences in the Civil War, the Indian wars, the world wars, Korea, and Vietnam, that war is far from a contest of chivalry between courtly knights. In fact the harsh, the non-chivalric brutality of war has always remained basically the same. Those young West Point cadets, however, did not know that, or were unwilling to accept that reality.

Race and culture may have also played a role. Let’s face reality. There was no possibility that a Lee, for instance, was going to run through the woods or across the Plains, wearing face paint and wielding bow and arrow or tomahawk. Lee himself wrote before the Civil War from Texas that the Comanches were “an uninteresting race.”⁶² In other words these cadets were going to fight shoulder-to-shoulder as good Europeans, not as “dirty” guerrillas, nor as wild red-skinned “savages.”

Time and memory were probably also a factor. The American Revolution (1775-1783) took place long before the Napoleonic wars (1796-1815). Even further in the past was the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763), which demonstrated the skill of Frederick the Great and his Prussians. Napoleon was much closer in time to the men who would command in the Civil War. Even the oldest generals of the Civil War were not born until after the Revolution. No one remembered the Revolution. But Lee was nine when Waterloo was fought. How many of us remember the First World War? It ended eighty-four years ago, almost the exact distance in time between the Revolution and the Civil War. Napoleon was a fresh memory to the combat leaders at Gettysburg.

Finally, as been discussed in great detail, these young, impressionable cadets were trapped in the Spartan, draconian environment of West Point for four to five years. While cloistered away they were informed by Professor Dennis Hart Mahan and Jomini’s *Art of War* that it was Napoleon and his system that was to be emulated.

The greatest irony of all of this was that Napoleon Bonaparte had no concrete, definable “system.” The world’s foremost expert on Napoleon, David Chandler, in discussing Napoleon’s *Maxims* states:

The practical value of [Napoleon’s] military maxims can be debatable. Napoleon, of course, never formulated a precise system of warfare on paper. His genius was essentially that of a practical soldier-statesman, rather than a theorist *per se*, and

he also saw no point in giving his concepts to [his marshals], never mind his opponents or posterity ... it must be stressed that *the Military Maxims* [of Napoleon] only provide at best a most generalized guide to actual military conduct. A slavish adherence to the letter can lead to disaster.⁶³

It is also important to remember that Napoleon, a Corsican, never really mastered the French language. Thus many of his “maxims” may be misinterpreted. Also as Chandler astutely points out, it is unclear who actually translated and transcribed *The Military Maxims of Napoleon*. The bottom line is that there is no true compilation of Napoleon’s theories on war.⁶⁴

Napoleon was a man who adapted to each military situation as it came up. He did what it took to win. As the hero of Austerlitz once wrote, “When it is possible to employ thunderbolts their use should be preferred to that of cannon.”⁶⁵ One of Napoleon’s greatest attributes as a soldier was his flexibility. It could be argued that no Civil War commander was ever as flexible in campaigns or battles -- Grant, Lee, Jackson, or Sherman included.

Before leaving Napoleon, it would be worth mentioning some of his maxims, or quotes, that may have influenced the leaders at Gettysburg. One of the most obvious is, “The principles of war are same as those of a siege. Fire must be concentrated on a single point and as soon as the breach is made the equilibrium is broken and the rest is nothing.”⁶⁶ Military leaders and historians alike have debated the meaning of this passage extensively. But if we examine Lee’s decision to launch his three-division direct frontal assault on the Union right center at a single point on July 3 at Gettysburg, it could be inferred that Lee was following Napoleon’s maxim.

It would also seem that the single-minded offensive orientation that Lee displayed in planning and conducting the Gettysburg campaign had its roots in Napoleon’s maxim, “At the commencement of a campaign, to advance or not to advance is a matter for grave consideration, but when once the offensive has been assumed, it must be sustained to the last extremity.”⁶⁷

Napoleon also added this, “The best means of defense is attack ... make war offensively, it is the sole means to become a great captain.” Legend also has him stating that, “The only logical end to defensive warfare is surrender.” It was this love of the offensive that cast the greatest shadow over many Civil War commanders and certainly summed up Lee’s mindset at Gettysburg and on many other fields.

In the last decade a strange phenomenon has descended on the town of Gettysburg. Some people claim to have seen ghosts on the battlefield, and for a price, tell thousands of tourists of their sightings. Naturally, these ghost stories are incredibly popular with the more than 1.7 million tourists who visit Gettysburg each year. I am often asked if I’ve ever seen a ghost, since my occupation guarantees that I spend a great deal of time on the battlefield. My answer is always, “yes and no.”

No, I’ve never seen a ghost on the field in my fifteen years as a guide. But, in sense the ghost of Napoleon lurks here. He had been dead for forty-two years when the Battle of Gettysburg was fought. But as one drives or walks along West Confederate Avenue, which parallels the Rebel lines on the final two days of the battle, the most obvious features are the scores of cannon pointed at the Union lines a mile to the east. This artillery, which represents the 152 guns that prepared the way for the most famous infantry assault in American history, brings to mind the real “ghost of Gettysburg.” Today we know that assault as “Pickett’s Charge.” To me, those guns are a symbol of Lee’s intent to, as Napoleon preached, sustain the offensive “to the last extremity.”

Historians’ View the Mahan-Jomini-Napoleon Connection

The controversy over the exact influence that Mahan, Jomini, and Napoleon had on Civil War leadership has been discussed in previous historical literature. The conclusions are mixed, at times

vague, and provide few answers. Dr. T. Harry Williams, in a number of his articles and books in the 1950s through the 1980s, concluded that there was a great deal of evidence to support the thesis that Mahan and Jomini did in fact play a large role in the conduct of the war. It could be argued that without Williams's scholarship, Mahan would have been totally forgotten except among historians of West Point.⁶⁸

Grady McWhiney and Perry Jamieson seem at the outset to agree with Williams in their well-researched but controversial 1982 study *Attack and Die: Civil War Military Tactics and the Southern Heritage*. The problem comes with their conclusion that the southerners' Celtic ethnicity was a key factor in the offensive-oriented tactical nature of the war. This ignores the fact that those of Celtic origins were as common in the North as they were in the South, and almost all officers, Northern and Southern, studied under Mahan. Also overlooked here is the fact that there were just as many Federal tactical assaults as there were Confederate assaults between 1861 and 1865.

Soldiers do what they are told. Those who gave the soldiers the orders to attack in the Civil War were professionally trained West Pointers, not Celts or Scots charging wildly at Sterling Bridge or Culloden.

Colonel James Morrison's 1986 *Best School in the World* has already been discussed briefly. Morrison downplays the Mahan-Jomini role in affecting combat leadership. He believes that only "studious" cadets would have been influenced by military theory while less studious cadets would not have paid attention to Mahan or Jomini. He writes:

... while it may be true that some officers -- Beauregard, Halleck, McClellan, and possibly Lee, for example ... gained a deeper appreciation of Jomini, the same cannot be said for the vast majority of their contemporaries. ... In fact the idea of men like Heth, A.P. Hill, Joseph Hooker, Custer, Pope, Burnside, George Pickett, John Bell Hood charging into battle "with a sword in one hand and Jomini's *Summary of the Art of War* in the other" is almost as ludicrous taken figuratively as literally.⁶⁹

Again, I respectfully disagree with Colonel Morrison. To suggest that because an officer was near the bottom of his West Point class; liked female companionship, a good party, or a stiff drink; that he was any less interested in tactics, could also be termed ludicrous. In fact, some of the officers that Morrison dismisses (e.g., A. P. Hill, Custer, and Hood), were known for their tactical proficiency in the Civil War.

English historian Paddy Griffith weighed in a year after *Best School in the World* with another scholarly study, *Battle Tactics of the Civil War*. Griffith states

... the higher theories of war allegedly applied by many American commanders in the 1860s were almost entirely made in France. It is Bonaparte the renegade Corsican and Jomini the renegade Swiss who are generally supposed to have written most of the books which shaped the battles. Such all-American figures as Dennis Hart Mahan take at least third place when set beside these colossi of the military art. There is no avoiding the fact that American military institutions before the Civil War were molded most profoundly by the military theories of the French ...⁷⁰

Griffith appears here to feel that Mahan and Jomini were very influential in the war. However, if we take note of his use of words such as "allegedly," and "generally supposed," Griffith seems to cast doubt on this theory. He never actually settles the issue when the book concludes. In the end he calls the American Civil War "the last Napoleonic War" without tying this conclusion to Mahan or Jomini. He also makes the point that Napoleon's approach to war was misunderstood by Mahan. Griffith comments that

The [Civil War] battles were certainly fought with essentially Napoleonic weaponry and tactics, although the doctrinal emphasis on fortification would doubtless have appeared a little odd and old-fashioned to [Napoleon]. He would presumably have been mightily puzzled to discover how such an approach had been identified by West Point professors [presumably Mahan] as being the logical lesson of Napoleonic warfare.⁷¹

As has been previously discussed, it was not only Mahan and Jomini that really misinterpreted Napoleon. It was Mahan's students who also "systematized" Napoleon. Also, "the Liverpoolian," as Griffith calls himself, has a strange and unique view of the war that possibly only a non-American could claim. While claiming to be neutral he states that

I would today classify myself as a supporter of Negro emancipation, states rights, and almost any lost cause. Against this I would condemn coercion, carpet-bagging, and firing the first shot. Sherman's doctrine of warfare against civilians I regard as one of the more vicious military theories of modern times, although it pales almost into benevolence when set beside certain Confederate plans for the massacre of the Apaches or some of their raiders depredations in the guerrilla war.⁷²

Finally, Edward Hagerman pitched in fourteen years ago with *The American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare*. Hagerman spends ten pages on Mahan and gives a good overview of the professor's contributions. On the surface at least, this work gives Mahan his due. Hagerman states, "The most significant figure among the American theorists [pre-Civil War] was Dennis Hart Mahan." Hagerman also raises an excellent and perhaps yet unanswered question concerning Mexican and Civil War doctrine, "Was the strategic objective victory by maneuver as an alternative to a frontal assault; or was the objective a direct strategic approach leading ultimately to tactical confrontation?"⁷³

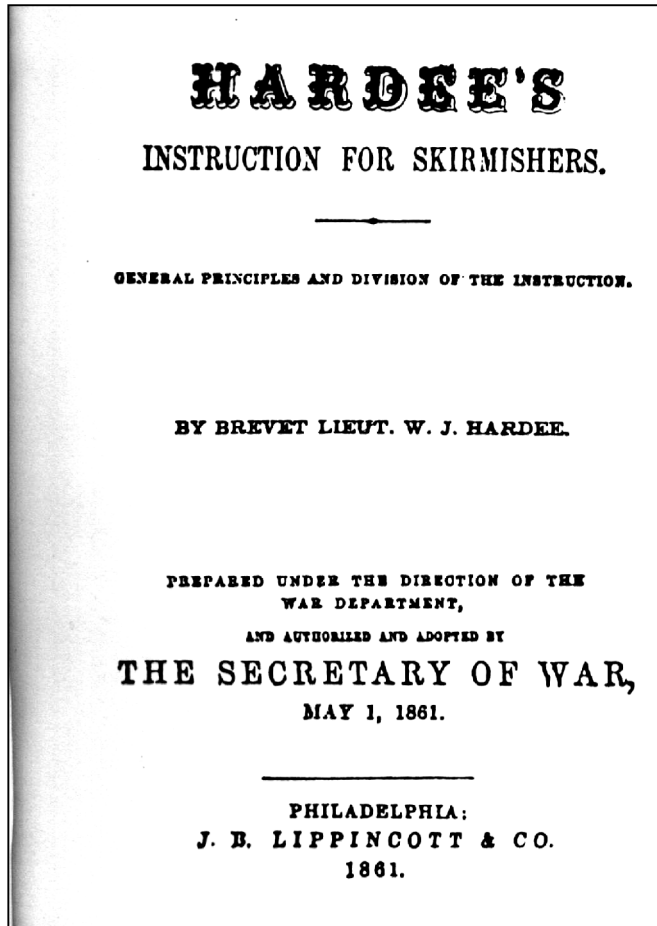
Other Influences: The "F.M.'s" of the Day

Besides Mahan, Jomini, and Napoleon, there were tactical field manuals, or as they are called in today's U.S. army, F.M.'s. Even a brief discussion of these manuals could be the subject of a forty-page essay. I will only provide a cursory overview of the basic manuals with which most leaders at Gettysburg would have been familiar. It is important to understand that as dry as they were (and still are), these manuals were embedded in the psyche of these professional soldiers.

For infantry the Bible from 1835 to 1855 was Winfield Scott's *Infantry-Tactics*, which emphasized Napoleonic discipline with soldiers advancing in line, shoulder-to-shoulder at a steady, slow pace called "quick time." This worked well during the Mexican War where short-range smoothbore muskets dominated the battlefield.⁷⁴

The advent of the Minié ball and rifled musket in the decade before the Civil War prompted a new manual in 1855 written by Captain William Hardee (USMA '38) entitled *Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. Hardee's work solved the tactical problem of the Minié ball by increasing the rate of advance with the "double quick-time" and the "run." He also sped up the rates at which small units could change formation. However, Hardee's manual did not really differ much from Scott's. In 1862, Union general Silas Casey (USMA '26) published *Infantry Tactics*, which for the most part was a rehash of Hardee's and Scott's manuals. However, it was embarrassing for Union officers to use a book named for a Confederate general, so Casey's was published in the North.⁷⁵

First Lieutenant Cadmus Wilcox (USMA '46 and Gettysburg Confederate brigade commander) also pitched in with *Rifles and Rifle Practice* in 1859. This manual predicted that



William J. Hardee's manual for skirmishers published by the War Department three months after Hardee resigned to serve the Confederacy.

long-range rifled muskets would change the battlefield but did not really offer a tactical solution.⁷⁶

The War Department published *Cavalry Tactics* in 1841. This manual was almost a direct copy of the French tactics taught at the cavalry school at Saumur, France. A contingent of U.S. army officers (including Phil Kearny) had visited Saumur and returned to write the manual. Union general Philip St. George Cooke (USMA '27) perhaps the U.S. army's most experienced cavalry officer, updated the War Department in 1862 with his own *Cavalry Tactics*. The big difference was that the previous manual advocated, like the French, charging in two lines. Cooke advocated one line of horsemen in the attack.⁷⁷

As for artillery, future Union Gettysburg hero Captain John Gibbon (USMA '47) supplied his 1860 *Artillerist's Manual*. Both Union and Confederate cannoneers used this manual. Most of Gibbon's book is technical, but the author did predict that firepower, not the French bayonet charge, would rule the battlefield. Ironically, Gibbon's division at Gettysburg proved the point, slaughtering his old West Point friend George Pickett's division, which was making just such an assault.⁷⁸

Incidentally, in 1839, First Lieutenant Robert Anderson (USMA '25) wrote the artillery manual that would serve the army until Gibbon's was published. Anderson's *Instructions for Field Artillery, Horse and Foot* was based on the French artillery manuals of the day. It is fitting then that Anderson was in command of the first Union cannons to fire in the Civil War at Fort Sumter, South Carolina on April 12, 1861.⁷⁹

"Real Soldiering": The Pre-Civil War U.S. Army

It is legend in the British army that an anonymous officer, after being informed that World War One was over, stated, "Thank God, now we can get back to real soldiering."

To someone who has never served in the regular armed forces that statement may seem odd. But anyone who has served in the regular army can understand it. Most professional soldiers spend a majority of their military careers at peace. The high-ranking commanders at Gettysburg

were no exception. Lee spent less than two of his thirty-two years in the U.S. army at war. He spent twenty months in Mexico (only six months of which were in direct combat) and one fruitless month-long expedition against the Comanches as the lieutenant colonel of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry in the summer of 1856.⁸⁰

Lee's experience in the pre-war army was typical. Except for the Mexican War and sporadic Indian fighting, the life that these officers led was one of monotonous, mind-numbing peace. As was mentioned earlier, few are interested in reading about peace. For that matter, relatively few seem interested in the Mexican conflict or pre-Civil War Indian wars. There has been a miniscule amount of scholarship devoted to the pre-Civil War when compared to the events of 1861-65.

This is unfortunate. It is impossible to understand the commanders at Gettysburg without having at least some knowledge of their formative years in the "Old Army." Yet, it never ceases to surprise me how many Civil War experts and historians have little or no knowledge of what the commanders of the war did before 1861 -- or after 1865, for that matter. The reasons why an Ambrose Burnside or a Harry Heth achieved such high rank are not mysterious at all with even a basic understanding of their pre-war careers.

Most of the commanders in the Battle of Gettysburg had never commanded more than 50 to 100 men before the war. In fact Lee only commanded troops once, during the aforementioned Comanche expedition of 1856, and Meade had no command experience before 1861.⁸¹

This fact alone is one of the keys to understanding a battle like Gettysburg. How many times I have stood on the field and heard people ask, "How could General 'So-and-So' have screwed this up so badly?" The answer is simple. None of the generals at Gettysburg had any experience moving large bodies of soldiers in the Old Army. The truly amazing thing about the war is how much these leaders did accomplish considering their experience level and age. There were only two active Civil War generals who had ever commanded a brigade prior to 1861: Winfield Scott and John Wool, both of whom were in their mid-seventies.⁸²

In the current U.S. army, a second/first lieutenant averages twenty-two to twenty-six years old and commands 40 soldiers, whereas at age twenty-three, Custer commanded 100 times as many men at Gettysburg. Similarly, in the current U.S. army, a captain averages twenty-seven to thirty-two years old and commands an average of 150 soldiers. Yet General Dorsey Pender, who was only twenty-nine, commanded 46 times as many men at Gettysburg. Also in his age group were generals Howard, Tyler, Stuart, and Hood.

At age twenty-eight, Edward Porter Alexander commanded seventy-five cannons on July 3, 1863. A modern American artillery officer of like age would command a battery of just six guns.

In the current U.S. army, a major/lieutenant colonel averages thirty-three to forty-four years of age and commands an average of 600 soldiers, whereas at thirty-seven years old, A.P. Hill commanded 33 times as many men at Gettysburg. Also in his age group were generals Reynolds, Hancock, Sykes, Slocum, Sickles, Pleasonton, Hunt, Warren, Longstreet, Pickett, McLaws, Rodes, R. H. Anderson, and Heth.

A colonel in the modern U.S. army averages forty-five to fifty years of age and commands some 3,000 soldiers. On the other hand, Meade, at forty-seven years old, commanded 31 times as many men. Also in his age group were generals Sedgwick, Ewell, Early, and Johnson.

And a major general in the modern U.S. army is typically fifty to fifty-six years old and commands 15,000-20,000 soldiers. Lee at Gettysburg commanded four times as many men at the age of fifty-six. Pendleton was also in his age group.⁸³

The first look at the army that these young men received was the Plain at West Point. There they learned to be engineers first, warriors second. As has been discussed in detail, Dennis Hart Mahan was their guiding light when it came to tactics and strategy. More importantly, friendships and animosities were formed that would last a lifetime and would affect behavior in the Civil War and at Gettysburg.

An often-repeated myth is that Southerners dominated West Point before the war. In fact, in the decade before 1861, only one-third of the faculty and staff were from the South. Of all

graduates between 1802 and 1861, 1,133 were from free states, and 627 were from slave states including Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri. In 1860, 58 percent of the officer corps in the army were from free states. This is in keeping with the relative populations in the North and South. Another misconception is that most Southern officers fought for the Confederacy. In fact one-third of the army's officer corps that were from slave states stayed loyal to the Union. It should be noted, however, that almost all of these Union 'Southerners' were from the upper south of Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina, and border/neutral/slave states of Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Delaware. Union Colonel Benjamin Franklin "Grimes" Davis, who hailed from Alabama and Mississippi, is the only U.S. army officer from the seven states of the deep South that fought for the Union. In the end the U.S. army lost 300 of its 1,080 officers (31 percent) to the Confederacy in 1861.⁸⁴

Once they left the academy, the West Point connection was not lost. Fully 744 of the 1,080 U.S. army officers in 1860 (72 percent) were academy grads.⁸⁵ In the modern U.S. army the percentage of West Point-trained officers hovers around 10 percent. No matter how remote the posting, an officer could usually find a comrade-in-arms who had shared the academy experience. But before discussing some of these relationships, let's turn to life in the Old Army.

Monotony, Liquor, and Gray-Haired Lieutenants

It is difficult for a modern U.S. army officer to comprehend just how slow promotion was for army officers of the nineteenth century. The following chart demonstrates the average time in grade at the various ranks:

Modern U.S. Army	U.S. Army 1836-1846
Second Lieutenant - 2 years	Second Lieutenant - 8 years
First Lieutenant - 2 years	First Lieutenant - 10 years
Captain - 5 years	Captain - 20 years
Major - 8 years	Major - 10 years
Lieutenant Colonel - 6 years	Lieutenant Colonel - 10 years
Colonel after 22 years service (age 44)	Colonel after 58 years service (age 80) ⁸⁶

Obviously, some pre-Civil War officers were ahead of the average. The Mexican War and the addition of four regiments in 1855 sped up the process slightly. But even if we take one of the fastest "movers," Robert E. Lee, it is still clear that promotion was glacial. In February 1861, after almost 32 years of service, Lee was a lieutenant colonel. Today, he would be at least four grades higher, wearing three or four stars. (Lee spent seventeen years in grade as a captain.)⁸⁷

Until 1861 there was no retirement policy in the U.S. army.⁸⁸

Once Old Army officers were assigned to their regiment, this is where they stayed, sometimes for twenty or thirty years. Today a U.S. army officer changes assignments every three or four years. The only way to be promoted in the Old Army was for the man above you to die or leave the army. In 1843 half the regimental commanders in the army had been in command for twenty years. Six of the ten infantry regimental colonels in 1861 were veterans of the War of 1812! One young lieutenant sarcastically described his chances for promotion, "[I'm in] the immortal Regiment -- there are lieutenants in it with gray heads, fine prospects for me!"⁸⁹

This, of course, meant a life of near-poverty if one chose to stay in the Old Army. Most assignments were either in disease- and Seminole-infested Florida or on isolated posts west of the Mississippi River. The annual pay of a second lieutenant, a grade at which one would spend eight years, remained \$3,600 per year from 1812 to 1857.⁹⁰ One officer described this bleak life as follows:

It is natural enough that those who love their wives and families should like to be with them, and not be dragged into the wilderness to be either stationed there separate from their families, or fighting the Indians in unhealthy climates, where nothing can be gained but everything lost -- health, reputation, money.⁹¹

George Meade fell victim, as his health failed in Florida only a year after graduation from West Point. In 1836 he resigned the army but returned after the end of the Second Seminole War in 1842. Meade was not alone in his hatred of the war in Florida between 1835 and 1842. In fact 18 percent of the army's officers resigned in 1836 after the disastrous "Dade Massacre" in which 106 of an 108-man army unit were killed by the Seminoles. Two years later one-half of the U.S. army was deployed in the disease-infested swamps of Florida. The army maintained a presence there until the early 1850s. Lieutenant A.P. Hill wrote his father from Florida in 1850, "For six months I have been in the woods, no society, clothes all worn, salt provisions, occasionally a deer, and at present no prospect of a termination. ... I am heartily tired of it."⁹²

In 1855, infantry, cavalry/dragon, or artillery officers had the possibility of being assigned to one of the army's seventy-four posts. Fewer than 100 soldiers, usually two companies, garrisoned thirty of these posts. Most of these posts were in desolate areas west of the Mississippi River away from the "civilized" people of the East. In 1861, 183 of the 198 line companies of the U.S. army were stationed in the West. (There was no U.S. army east of the Mississippi River to oppose the Confederates after Fort Sumter).⁹³

Life on the western frontier was brutal and agonizingly boring. Lieutenant E. Kirby Smith, ironically the future Confederate commander of the trans-Mississippi west, spoke for every frontier soldier when he wrote, "Automaton-like we involuntarily glide through the same monotonous scene."⁹⁴ Captain John Phelps wrote in 1859 from Utah, "I am suffocating, physically, morally, and intellectually ... and feel ... like begging to be taken out and hung for the sake of variety."⁹⁵ Phelps resigned that same year, returning as a Union general in the Civil War. Sick of Florida, A.P. Hill asked for a transfer. The army "accommodated" Hill by sending him to Fort Ricketts, Texas on the Rio Grande. Less than thrilled, Hill, after witnessing a murderous gunfight, condemned the civilians in the area:

This is the country [Texas] to annex which blood and treasure has been poured out freely as the rains from heaven ... My regret is that [the Texans] do not destroy each other fast enough and finally shoot out the entire race. The world would be no loser, and certainly heaven no gainer.⁹⁶

If army service could depress even the stoic, duty-bound, Robert E. Lee, then anyone could fall victim to depression. Captain Lee wrote in the early 1850s, "I can advise no young man to enter the army. The same application, the same self-denial, the same endurance, in any other profession will advance him faster and further."⁹⁷

Unless one has had the experience of serving on a small army post under an eccentric martinet-like superior officer, it is difficult to explain the hardships to be endured. Small, monotonous, isolated, frontier army posts, combined with the snail-like promotion rate, created a breeding ground for odd behavior.

Probably the most famous of these odd balls was Captain Braxton Bragg, who was legendary for requesting supplies as a company commander and then turning down that same request as the post quartermaster. Bragg's commander exploded, "My God, Mr. Bragg, you have quarreled with every officer in the army, and now you are quarreling with yourself!" Two eccentrics in their own right, First Lieutenant Thomas Jackson and his commander Captain William French, became embroiled in a petty squabble at Fort Meade, Florida in 1851. In true army fashion, rank won out and Jackson resigned to go teach at Virginia Military Institute. But Jackson had the last

laugh, becoming the legendary “Stonewall” Jackson, while French’s Civil War career sank into obscurity.⁹⁸

Another character was Captain Thomas Sherman (a future Union general who was badly wounded at Port Hudson in 1863). Lieutenant John Tidball (who would become one of the Army of the Potomac’s best artillery officers) reported to Sherman at Fort Brown, Texas in 1848. Sherman immediately began berating Tidball for being late, and then began instructing the lieutenant line-by-line in army regulations. Tidball, who had contracted malaria, complained of dizziness, to which Sherman replied, “A soldier should never be sick, sir. I was never sick in all my life.” Later at Fort Adams, Rhode Island on a sub-zero night Tidball asked his captain permission to make a fire, but was informed by Sherman, “[You do] not require fire, it is unhealthy; see I don’t have a fire.” Tidball described Sherman’s method of inspecting the troops as follows:

One thing after another, which he saw, or imagined he saw wrong about the company rapidly advanced him from ordinary wrath to a state of raving madness. He then fairly frothed at the mouth and the air around became blue with his lurid imprecations.⁹⁹

Opportunities for professional development for officers in the pre-war army were minimal. There were schools for infantry, artillery, and cavalry at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; Fort Monroe, Virginia; and Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, but attendance at these schools was not mandatory, and only a small percentage of officers wanted to or were allowed to go. Money problems also periodically closed the schools. Fort Monroe’s artillery school closed permanently in 1834. Almost all professional development was to be conducted at one’s assigned post -- and that rarely happened.¹⁰⁰

Faced with poverty, slow promotion, boredom, isolation, abrasive superiors, and little opportunity for professional development, many officers turned to an age-old solution: consuming large quantities of liquor.

Lieutenant A.P. Hill was a typical example. He confessed that while on patrol in 1849 in Florida, “The brandy bottle, a quart out, was full when I started, but being so cold, wet, and thoroughly chilled, I drank all of it and came into camp and they tell me just rolled off my horse.” Later someone stole his flask on another patrol and Hill lamented, “Some scoundrel stole my whiskey. ... May it choke him, confound him!”¹⁰¹

Lieutenant George Crook, perhaps the army’s finest post-Civil War Indian fighter (along with Gettysburg veteran Ranald MacKenzie, USMA ’62), described Benecia Barracks, California in 1852. His observations stand as perhaps the best indictment of the army’s dirty secret:

The Commandant Maj. Day [Hannibal Day, who would command a brigade of U.S. Regular Infantry at Gettysburg] ... seemed head and foremost of the revelers, one of his pastimes when drunk was to pitch furniture in the center of the room and set fire to it. ... My first duty after reporting was to serve as the file closer to the funeral escort of Maj. Miller [Albert Miller graduated USMA with Day in 1823], who had just died from the effects of strong drink. We all assembled in the room where lie the corpse. Then Maj. Day said “hell fellars, old Miller is dead and he can’t drink so let us all take a drink.” You can imagine my horror at hearing such an impious speech and coming from an officer of his age and rank. I couldn’t believe this was real army life.¹⁰²

But many an officer would find that this was indeed army life. Crook went on to describe enlisted men drowning in the mud of the post when they passed out drunk. He also recalled his first Indian fight. He was shot in the hip with an arrow and rode back to the post. There,

Lieutenant Hiram Dryer (whose name students of the Battle of Antietam may recognize) tended to his wound and informed the horrified Crook that everyone on post was too drunk to fight Indians that day. Revenge would have to wait until the next day when the men and officers were sober.¹⁰³

It is interesting to note that Crook and Dryer were in the 4th U.S. Infantry, the same regiment from which two years later U.S. Grant was forced to resign due to drinking problems. If Crook's description of life in the 4th is anywhere near accurate, one has to wonder about the extent of Grant's "problem."

Of course, the primary mission of the U.S. army both before and after the Civil War was, depending on your point of view, fighting and killing Indians or protecting the white settlers. Although Indian battles were at best sporadic, almost all of the twenty-seven high-ranking leaders at Gettysburg mentioned earlier had some experience in combat during the Indian wars. (Pendleton, Rodes, and Sickles being the exceptions). Some, like Meade, Slocum, Howard, and Hill, were simply in the "combat zone" of Florida and participated in little direct fighting. Others, such as Sykes, Pender, Hood, Heth, and Ewell, saw a great deal of action.¹⁰⁴

The attitude of the officers towards the Indians varied. Some, like Harry Heth, Crook, Grant, Gibbon, St. George Cooke, and John Wool, sympathized with their enemies. That sympathy, however, did not prevent many of them from killing large numbers of Indians. Others, like Lewis Armistead or Sherman, felt that the sooner all the Indians were killed, the better life would be. Of course, in the end, the latter attitude won the day. Albert Myer, who would become the U.S. army's chief signal officer from 1863 to 1880, predicted the end result of the Indian wars in 1855 while stationed in Texas, "The war on this frontier is one of extermination."¹⁰⁵

Despite these experiences, Indian fighting had little or no effect on Civil War combat. In fact, I know of no engagement east of the Mississippi River in the Civil War where one could say that lessons learned in Indian fighting were utilized. There is a myth, due mostly to Michael Shaara's portrayal of Union cavalry commander John Buford in his dramatic novel *The Killer Angels*, that some of the dismounted cavalry tactics of the war were learned on the western frontier in response to the Indian threat. This myth has no basis in fact. Dismounted cavalry tactics were right out of the conventional cavalry manuals of the day, and were used not just by Buford, but also by virtually every cavalry officer on both sides between 1861 and 1865.¹⁰⁶

The first formal class on Indian fighting was not taught at West Point until a year after the disastrous 1876 Battle of Little Big Horn. This is ironic in that except for the Apaches of the desert southwest, all of the hostile tribes had been subdued or destroyed by 1877. Mahan certainly did not emphasize Indian fighting in his tactical classes. Colonel St. George Cooke, one of the army's most experienced Indian fighters, wrote a cavalry field manual in 1859 which was adopted by the army three years later. Old Army historian Edward Coffman characterized the army's apathy toward the Indian wars, speaking of St. George Cooke and his manual as follows:

Even such a Plains veteran as Cooke regarded his Indian fights as mere interesting incidents rather than military actions to be analyzed as such. When he worked up a book of cavalry tactics in 1859, he also turned to Europe [France] for guidance, and devoted only a few pages to [Indian fighting].¹⁰⁷

In fact, to anyone familiar with the Indian wars, it is obvious that the lessons learned in each Indian battle were largely forgotten by the next fight. So not only did this type of combat not affect the Civil War, it strangely did not even affect the Indian wars very much. As was mentioned earlier, one explanation for this may have been racial or cultural. European warfare appealed to the sensibilities of the U.S. army officer corps more so than Indian warfare. This brings to mind something that British writer Aldous Huxley said in 1959, "That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons of history."¹⁰⁸

The subject of this essay is leadership, and its emphasis is on the officer corps of the pre-Civil War U.S. army. Part of that experience, however, was commanding the enlisted men. So let us take a brief look at the typical "Old Army" enlisted man.

Although the numbers varied through the years, the average soldier during the period from 1830 to 1860 was twenty-four years old (although many lied about their age). One-third were illiterate, and over half were immigrants from Ireland, Germany, England, and Canada. Of those immigrant soldiers, fully half were from Ireland, which means that one-quarter of the army consisted of Irish immigrants.

The immigrant status of the soldiers brought up an ethnic prejudice held by many of the officers. Captain George McCall (USMA '22 and Union division commander in the 1862 Peninsula campaign) was typical when he referred to his Irish troops as "the unsophisticated, untutored, and intractable Sons of Erin."¹⁰⁹

Recruits enlisted for five years at nine dollars a month until 1854, when monthly pay rose to thirteen dollars. Almost all of these men were recruited from the North, most in New York City and Pennsylvania. There were few recruiting stations in the South. In 1840 the army recruited 1,444 men in New York and a paltry four men in the South! In 1855 the South provided 291 recruits while New York alone increased the ranks by 1,971 men. This is one reason why only twenty-six enlisted men deserted the army in 1861 to fight for the Confederacy¹¹⁰ -- there were few Southerners in the army's enlisted ranks.

It was not until the Mexican War that enlisted men could become officers. Fewer than 100 enlisted men became officers from 1847 to 1861. Those who accepted commissions were not really accepted by the West Pointers and those officers appointed from civilian life.¹¹¹

Fully 40 percent of army officers in 1861 were Episcopalian (despite the fact that only 4 percent of Americans attended Episcopal churches), and 87 percent were Protestant. Although there were many immigrants and segregated ethnic and racial units formed between 1861 and 1865, the average Union or Confederate commander was an American-born white Anglo-Saxon Protestant.¹¹²

The two biggest "soldier problems" for pre-war army officers were drunkenness and desertion. In 1856, more than 20 percent of the army soldiers deserted. Civil War desertion rates were comparable. There are no exact statistics on alcohol abuse for enlisted men. If Lieutenant Crook's description of the officers' drinking habits is accurate, we can only imagine how much the troops drank.¹¹³

Although certainly the enlisted soldiers were better trained than the citizen soldiers of the Civil War, there was no centralized basic training for army recruits. Training camps did exist in the pre-Civil War era at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri; Governor's Island, New York; Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania; and Fort Monroe, Virginia, but the vast majority of enlisted men, as had their officers, received their training at the posts to which they were assigned.¹¹⁴

Army life for the officers tended to kill any desire to pursue professional development. This makes what they learned at West Point under Mahan even more important because sometimes this was the only time some of these future Civil War leaders thought at all about larger strategic and tactical subjects. Without schools for professional education and without reading on their own, Mahan's teachings may have been all that these officers possessed in their military subconscious.

General Gordon Granger (USMA '45 and one of the Union heroes of Chickamauga) summed up the mind-numbing atmosphere of the pre-Civil War U.S. army as well as anyone. When asked why regular army officers did not study tactical theory he replied, "What would you expect of men who have had to spend their lives at a two-company post, where there was nothing to do when off duty but play draw poker and drink whiskey ..."¹¹⁵

Despite the brutal hardships, many officers chose not to pursue Union volunteer commissions nor Confederate commissions in the Civil War. The army was their home, and so these men were not in high command at a battle like Gettysburg. I would venture to bet, however, that most of

these forgotten heroes were as competent on the field of battle as some of the generals who commanded them. Their names will never be spoken in the same breath as a Lee, Meade, Longstreet, or even a Chamberlain. But the names of these Gettysburg veterans should not be forgotten. The following list is just a sample of the officers who stayed in the regular army:

Colonel Hannibal Day, 1st Regular Brigade: 44 years U.S. army service*
Captain Henry Freedley, 3rd U.S. Infantry: 24 years service
Captain Levi Bootes, 6th U.S. Infantry: 28 years
Captain Thomas Dunn, 12th U.S. Infantry: 17 years
Colonel Sidney Burbank, 2nd Regular Brigade: 45 years
Major Arthur Lee, 2nd U.S. Infantry: 27 years
Captain David Hancock, 7th U.S. Infantry: 31 years
Captain William Clinton, 10th U.S. Infantry: 16 years
Major DeLancey Floyd-Jones, 11th U.S. Infantry: 38 years
Captain Richard Lord, 1st U.S. Cavalry: 14 years
Captain T. F. Rodenbough, 2nd U.S. Cavalry: 9 years including award of Medal of Honor
Captain Julius Mason, 5th U.S. Cavalry: 21 years
Major Samuel Starr, 6th U.S. Cavalry: 38 years
Captain John Tidball, 2nd U.S. Artillery: 43 years **
Second Lieutenant John Calef, 2nd U.S. Artillery: 42 years
First Lieutenant Alanson Randol, 1st U.S. Artillery: 32 years
Second Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing, 4th U.S. Artillery: 6 years, killed in action at Gettysburg
First Lieutenant A.C.M. Pennington, 2nd U.S. Artillery: 43 years ***¹¹⁶

*all service figures include years attending West Point Military Academy

**served two years as volunteer N.Y. artillery colonel

***served one year as volunteer N.J. cavalry colonel

Old Army Friends at Gettysburg

I cannot possibly discuss all the Old Army relationships at Gettysburg; there were literally dozens. I would like to mention a few. Keep in mind that you can't footnote friendships, and so you'll forgive me if some of what follows is purely opinion. In addition, I have included brief discussions only of relationships that affected the battle in some way.

There were scores of pre-war friendships at Gettysburg that were dramatic and tragic. Two that come to mind are Armistead, Garnett, and Hancock (pre-war 6th U.S. Infantry comrades), and Gibbon and Pickett (classmates at West Point) opposing each other on July 3. These friendships, however, did not change the outcome of the battle, so they will not be covered here.

Longstreet and Pickett spent more than ten years together in the 8th U.S. Infantry, and were in combat together against the Mescalero Apaches and the Mexicans. One of the enduring images of the Mexican War is Lieutenant George Pickett carrying the colors of the 8th U.S. Infantry over the wall at Chapultepec after taking them from a badly wounded Lieutenant James Longstreet. Longstreet's favoritism towards Pickett during the Civil War is well documented. Pickett would probably not have been in Longstreet's corps at all had it not been for their time together in the 8th U.S. Infantry, and "Pickett's Charge" could well have been "McLaws Charge."¹¹⁷

Also well documented was the friendship between Longstreet and McLaws, which dated back to the four years they spent together at West Point. They both graduated in 1842 with other Gettysburg notables Abner Doubleday, George Sykes, Henry Eustis, John Newton, Seth Williams, and R.H. Anderson. Longstreet lobbied in vain for McLaws to be a corps commander

once Stonewall Jackson died. However, that friendship apparently ended on July 2, 1863, after the now famous -- or infamous -- "countermarch" of McLaws and Hood's divisions. After the battle, McLaws was quite vicious in his criticism of his old friend. Longstreet, in turn, never forgave what he perceived as a betrayal and relieved McLaws in the fall of 1863. President Jefferson Davis exonerated McLaws, but the legend is that Longstreet and his old West Point comrade never spoke to each other again.¹¹⁸ Something had to have gone horribly wrong west of Seminary Ridge on the afternoon of July 2 if a lifelong army friendship dissolved in four hours.

Alfred Pleasonton's pre-war friendship with John Buford played a huge role in the outcome of the Battle of Gettysburg. Captain Pleasonton was Lieutenant Buford's (USMA '48) company commander in the pre-war 2nd U.S. Dragoons. They struck up a friendship hunting and fishing together on the Plains. They fought the Lakota Sioux together in one of the biggest and most decisive Indian battles of the period, Ash Hollow (Blue Water) in Nebraska Territory six years before the Civil War. When Buford died of typhus in December of 1863, Pleasonton wrote a heartfelt obituary. Pleasonton even accused the U.S. government of "blackballing" Buford because of Buford's slave-state (Kentucky) roots.¹¹⁹

It would be logical to assume that Pleasonton had chosen one of his trusted friends when he chose John Buford to conduct a difficult and vital cavalry mission on June 28, 1863. On that day George Meade took command of the Army of the Potomac and ordered it north toward Pennsylvania from the Frederick, Maryland area in pursuit of Lee's army. The Army of the Potomac's cavalry corps, led by Pleasonton, was ordered to screen and conduct reconnaissance in advance of the infantry. Meade's army, although split into two wings, would actually move in three columns. This meant Pleasonton would have to use his three cavalry divisions to screen each column. A quick map-check showed that the left or western column consisting of the 1st, 3rd, and 11th infantry corps, led by Major General John Reynolds, would be the closest to Lee's main body in south-central Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley. Therefore, whoever was riding ahead of Reynolds would be most likely to encounter the Rebel army first.¹²⁰

For this critical mission Pleasonton had three division commanders to choose from: Judson Kilpatrick, David M. Gregg, and John Buford. Kilpatrick was new, only having taken command that day. Pleasonton certainly liked Kilpatrick and had lobbied for the young man's promotion. Gregg was one of the most competent and dependable cavalry leaders of the entire war and certainly would have been up to the task. But like a baseball manager going to the bullpen, Pleasonton tapped his old dragoon comrade, Buford. Had it not been Buford who rode into Gettysburg on June 30, 1863, the whole battle and campaign could have turned out differently. Buford's orders from Pleasonton were to march his division to Gettysburg by nightfall, June 30. A year later, after Buford's death, Pleasonton claimed before the Committee on the Conduct of the War that he had ordered Buford to hold Gettysburg at all costs. But this was merely Pleasonton blowing his own horn, as he was wont to do. Buford made the decision to defend the approaches to Gettysburg on his own. As 19th-century Gettysburg historian Compté de Paris stated, "This first inspiration of a cavalry and a true soldier [Buford] decided in every respect the fate of the campaign." But it was Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Dickinson, one of Meade's staff officers at Gettysburg, who probably best evaluated the situation, "... General Buford was, at least for once, the right man in the right place."¹²¹

Another of Buford's pre-war friendships may have affected the first day's fighting along McPherson's and Seminary ridges, and thus the entire battle. The first Confederate commanders that Buford would encounter on the morning of July 1 would be Harry Heth and A.P. Hill. Heth's division was the lead element in Hill's corps. Heth was closest to Gettysburg on the eve of the battle, and had orders from Hill to march on Gettysburg the next day. Although there is no direct proof of this, I think we can assume that it was a strong possibility Buford knew he would be up against Heth and Hill in July 1 and made his tactical dispositions accordingly.¹²²

Heth was a close army and West Point comrade of Buford's, and Hill was also an academy intimate of his. With Ambrose Burnside, Heth, Hill, and Buford were also notorious for their

“party” habits. One unsubstantiated legend is that cadets Heth and Burnside accumulated the highest unpaid bar bill in the history of West Point’s storied Benny Havens Tavern. In fact, it could be argued that Heth and Burnside were the most popular officers in the pre-Civil War army. This could account at least in part for their high rank during the war, despite their numerous and at times horrific tactical failures. Their fellow army officers simply liked them!¹²³

Buford and Heth’s friendship continued onto the western frontier. They both participated in the Indian battle of Ash Hollow (Blue Water) in 1855. Five years later Heth entrusted the well-being of his beloved sister, Kittie, to his comrade. Kittie wanted to go west, and Captain Buford was heading that way from his assignment in the east enroute to Fort Crittenden, Utah. Heth asked Buford to escort his sister through hostile Indian country. Buford, as tough and hardened as any soldier who ever wore the uniform, described his feelings writing that the “dangerous privations on that route at this time of the year are so great that I can hardly summon the courage to make them.” The bottom line is that Heth and Buford had to have been close to have entered into that sort of arrangement.¹²⁴

Buford knew that both Heth and Hill were aggressive commanders because he had known them in the pre-war army. In fact it was Captain Harry Heth’s headlong mounted charge at Ash Hollow, witnessed by Lieutenant Buford, which had played a large role in the army’s “victory” (it was closer to a massacre) there. Heth and Buford did not fight against one another in the first two years of the war. Heth had only joined Lee’s army in February 1863, and Buford had not been directly involved in the Battle of Chancellorsville. Thus Buford’s only knowledge of Heth’s character or personality could have been from their pre-war friendship and army service.¹²⁵

John Buford knew his old comrade would attack headlong against his outnumbered cavalry division on the morning of July 1, 1863. And he probably knew Hill would do little to hold Heth back. When Union Colonel Thomas Devin, one of Buford’s subordinates, expressed overconfidence just before the battle about stopping Heth and Hill, Buford informed him in no uncertain terms what would happen when the fighting started. Buford’s hard, cynical, snappish reply to Devin has become part of Gettysburg legend:

No you won’t [hold back Heth and Hill]. They will attack in the morning and they will come booming-skirmishers three deep. You will have to fight like the devil to hold your own until supports arrive. The enemy must know the importance of this position and will strain every nerve [missing copy] it, and if we are able to hold it we will do well.¹²⁶

Because of his friendships with Heth and Hill and their pre-war army experience together, Buford knew that both Heth and Hill would push his dismounted troopers aggressively. There would be no holding back. The situation would be desperate from the very beginning of the fight. Every dispatch that Buford sent to higher headquarters conveyed the gravity of the situation. If it had been Longstreet’s corps instead of Hill’s, Buford may have done something different. But the wily, tough Union cavalry commander knew that Heth and Hill would throw caution to the wind. Of course, history shows that they did and stumbled into a situation that confused both them and Lee -- and influenced everything that would follow in the next three days.

John Buford was a tough, cynical professional whose bottom line was mission accomplishment. He had no time for foolishness from subordinates, peers, superiors, or civilians. He was, as one fellow officer described him, “not to be trifled with.”¹²⁷

How did Buford turn out that way? One explanation might be that he had served in the pre-war army under one of the toughest, most cynical, professionally competent officers in the U.S. history – William Selby Harney -- and had emulated his style. In fact, Buford provides a perfect case study of the way the pre-war Old Army could affect future behavior in the Civil War.

Buford's Old Army Mentor: William "Mad Bear" Harney

Most of the U.S. army's highest-ranking officers of the pre-Civil War era were so old in April of 1861 that they could not take field duty. Many of the most influential officers of the thirty years preceding Fort Sumter were already dead. The ones who did take the field did not last through the entire conflict. Thus, most of these men are forgotten. But these were the mentors of the young officers who would rise to Civil War immortality. Of course, much has been written about generals Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor and their influence on their subalterns in Mexico, particularly on Lee and Grant respectively.

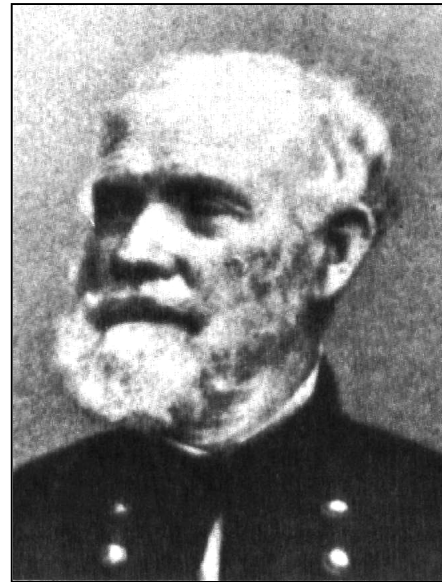
Scott and Taylor were not the only influences in the pre-war army. Space will not allow me to cover all of the army commanders who helped mold the leaders at Gettysburg. It is sad that legends like Walker K. Armistead, Joseph Totten, Alexander Macomb, Stephen W. Kearny, Richard Mason, David Twiggs, William Harney, Philip St. George Cooke, Persifor Smith, E.V. Sumner, Bennet Riley, Hugh Brady, Henry Leavenworth, John C. Wool, N.S. Clarke, Matthew Arbuckle, C.F. Smith, Ben Beall, John Garland, Silas Casey, and George Wright are barely footnotes in history. All of these men, however, were giants in the Old Army.¹²⁸

All of the men who rose to be the "stars" of the Civil War remembered these men who had trained them on the frontier and in Mexico. Furthermore, many emulated their mentors when their time in the sun was at hand. Every high-ranking officer at Gettysburg who had served in the army before the war was, in a sense, a product of his former commanders. I will use one example: William Selby "Mad Bear" Harney and his influence on the personality and character of Union cavalry division commander John Buford.

William Selby Harney was born near Nashville, Tennessee in 1800. At the tender age of 18 he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 1st U.S. Infantry and stationed at Fort Warren, Massachusetts. He immediately demonstrated a proclivity that would follow him throughout his career: getting on the wrong side of his superiors. He was court-martialed and acquitted for improperly taking charge of his post. A Harney biographer states, "... this incident [at Ft. Warren] demonstrated willingness to take matters into his own hands. It was the first of several such incidents: Harney was prone to speak out, take action, and worry about the results later."¹²⁹

Harney fought in the Winnebago and Black Hawk wars in the 1820s and 30s. These were dirty, unchivalrous conflicts and probably set the stage for Harney's brutal methods in later Indian wars.¹³⁰ Harney's reputation was made in the Second Seminole War fought in Florida between 1835 and 1842. Craving action he volunteered for the newly formed 2nd U.S. Dragoons in 1836. Partly due to his friendship with President Andrew Jackson, Harney was appointed the lieutenant colonel of the new regiment.¹³¹

In Florida the 2nd Dragoons established a reputation as a flamboyant, bold, arrogant, and brutal fighting unit. A modern analogy would be the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division or Special Forces in Vietnam. The Seminole wars were as close to the Vietnam War as any the U.S. army would fight before 1965. The Dragoons, a mounted unit, were forced to dismount and slog through the swamps and jungles chasing a shadowy, elusive, guerilla-type enemy. Quarter was not asked for,



General William "Mad Bear" Harney

nor given, and civilians were despised and abused by the soldiers. (The term “cracker” stems from the Seminole war nickname that the soldiers gave the poor white farmers in Florida.)¹³²

The original colonel of the 2nd Dragoons (1836-1846) was a hard case in his own right, David Twiggs. Nicknamed “Tiger” by his men, Twiggs lived up to that moniker in combat in the War of 1812, and later in the Mexican War, where his leadership of the 2nd Regular Division at Monterey earned him the official thanks of the U.S. Congress (an honor won by only twenty-five officers before the Civil War). Feared and respected more than loved, Twiggs set the tone for the regiment. Sadly, Twiggs is now known primarily for his betrayal of the U.S. army units in Texas in 1861. His southern sympathies caused him to surrender those units to Texas Confederates months before Ft. Sumter, even though he was still a general in the U.S. army. He was dismissed from the army in disgrace in March 1861, and became the oldest U.S. army officer to serve the Confederacy, at 71. He died in 1862.¹³³

The 2nd Dragoons under Twiggs was the perfect vehicle for Harney. The men sported earrings and wore their hair long. Their officers were dashing rogues, mavericks, and hard cases such as Charles May and Ben Beall. The long-haired May was known for entering bars still riding his horse. His wild mounted charge at Resaca de la Palma in Mexico is part of army legend. Beall was beloved and respected for his bravery in Florida and Mexico. (Both May and Beall retired or resigned from the army at the outset of the Civil War and both were dead by 1864, and so they are sadly forgotten today.)¹³⁴

Harney himself cut quite a soldierly figure. He was literally larger than life at 6 feet 3 inches tall and 250 pounds. His physical strength was legendary, and he was the fastest man in a foot race in the regiment. His horsemanship was superb.¹³⁵ In the Everglades, Lieutenant Colonel Harney fought the Seminoles for four years (1837-41) and in the process became a legend, but again angered his superiors. Harney had his men dress as Indians to better blend in. General Walker Armistead (Lewis Armistead’s father) ordered that practice stopped. Harney refused and got away with it.¹³⁶

During one operation in Florida, Harney noticed flares going up in the distance. He sent an officer to find out the source, and the young subaltern returned stating that the flares were being fired at the direct order of General Winfield Scott himself. Harney exploded, replying, “Blank General Scott and the whole fraternity of Washington generals!” Whether the message was delivered is unknown, but what is known is that Scott and Harney hated each other throughout their careers.¹³⁷

After raiding a Seminole camp and capturing ten prisoners, Harney had four shot, five hanged, and offered to spare the tenth Indian if he would guide Harney’s dragoons to another Seminole chieftain’s village. The Indian agreed.¹³⁸

Colonel Stephen W. Kearny, who obviously did not like Harney, probably best summarized his gritty subordinate’s Florida service:

You know the opinion I have of Harney, that he has no more brains than a greyhound. Yet I consider that by his stupidity and repugnance in action, he has done more to inject the Indians with a fear of us and desperate state of their cause, than all the other commanders.¹³⁹

Then came the Mexican War in 1846, and right away Harney gained everyone’s attention. General Zachary Taylor gave Harney the defensive assignment of protecting the Texas frontier from Indian raids. However, Harney decided to invade Mexico on his own with a small force of the 2nd U.S. Dragoons and some Texas and Delaware Indian volunteers that Harney had illegally raised. Without orders, Harney, now a colonel and commander of his regiment, moved into the disputed territory with his force, but was soon recalled by General John C. Wool.¹⁴⁰

Winfield Scott, of course, was angered by Harney’s insolence and placed the 2nd Dragoons under Lt. Colonel Edwin Sumner, and refused to take Harney with him when he began his

invasion of Mexico. Harney stated that Scott be damned and that he would go anyway. Scott court-martialed Harney for his insubordination. The court decided that Harney was guilty but that he would accompany Scott as the dragoon commander in Mexico. Harney had miraculously gotten his way again.¹⁴¹

Harney's service in Mexico just added to his reputation as a brave yet uncontrollable soldier. He and his dragoons without orders or support routed a Mexican force at Medelin in March 1847. Harney's mounted men again were dramatically successful routing the enemy at Plan Del Rio and Cerro Gordo, for which the colonel was brevetted to brigadier general.

After leading a cavalry charge (Richard Ewell and Phil Kearny included) to the gates of Mexico City on August 20, 1847, Harney's dragoons were placed in reserve for the street fighting to follow.¹⁴² That did not stop Harney from causing controversy. He was placed in charge of the execution of thirty members of the San Patricio Battalion: Irish immigrants who had deserted the U.S. army to fight for the Mexican army against the Americans. Harney tied their necks with ropes to overhead beams and stood them on wagons. He ordered a wounded prisoner to be hanged tied to his stretcher. Instead of immediately hanging the Irishmen, Harney informed them that the last thing they would see on earth would be the American flag flying over Chapultepec. (The fortress had not yet fallen.) He made the traitors wait in agony until the U.S. flag fluttered over the fortress, then Harney ordered the execution.¹⁴³

After the Mexican War, Harney commanded both the 2nd Dragoons and the 8th Military District of Texas. It was in this period that Lieutenant John Buford joined the regiment in 1849. He would serve under Harney for the next nine years. In 1854, an incompetent junior officer named Lieutenant John Grattan bungled a minor law enforcement incident near Ft. Laramie, Nebraska. In trying to punish a large body of Sioux for the theft of a cow, Grattan proceeded to get himself and the thirty soldiers with him wiped out. Secretary of War Jefferson Davis was outraged and ordered the Sioux punished for "The Grattan Massacre."¹⁴⁴

The nation's premiere Indian-fighter, Colonel William S. Harney, was placed in command of the punitive expedition. Harney was on leave in France at the time, so the campaign would have to wait a year. When the 600-strong army force (parts of the 2nd Dragoons and the 10th U.S. Infantry) set out from Fort Kearny in late August 1855 the hard-boiled commander exclaimed, "By God, I'm for battle ... no peace." Present were future Gettysburg leaders John Buford, Alfred Pleasonton, Albion Howe, Beverly Robertson, Harry Heth, and Gouverneur K. Warren.¹⁴⁵

On September 3, near the Platte River in the Nebraska Territory, Harney's force came upon a Brule Sioux band led by Little Thunder at Blue Water Creek. Little Thunder claimed innocence for Grattan's death. The indifferent Harney told the chieftain to go back to his village and prepare for battle. He then unleashed his infantry and dragoons, who overran the village killing or capturing 150 of the 250 Indians, many of whom were women and children. Lieutenant Warren reported that a number of Indians were shot while hiding in holes.¹⁴⁶

This was the worst defeat that the western Sioux had ever suffered at the hands of the army and in effect kept peace on the northern Plains until 1866. It earned Harney the nickname "Mad Bear" amongst the tribes, and long after his retirement the Sioux worried that he would come again. Legend has it that the Sioux and Cheyenne feared that it was not Custer, Terry, Crook, or Gibbon, but "Mad Bear" Harney who was campaigning against them in the 1876 Little Big Horn campaign. General Samuel Curtis, stationed in the West during the Civil War, commented, "Since Harney's attack of the Sioux, many years ago at Ash Hollow [Blue Water], the popular cry of settlers and soldiers on the frontier favors an indiscriminate slaughter which is difficult to restrain ... I abhor the style, but so it goes from Minnesota to Texas."¹⁴⁷

After Blue Water, Harney battled the government again, urging that the military control Indian policy, not the civilian Indian Office. He lost that fight. In retrospect, Harney was correct. History has documented the disaster that was the civilian-controlled Indian Office (or Bureau). Promoted to brigadier general in 1858, Harney left the 2nd Dragoons and took command in Oregon Territory and was again at the center of controversy. Without permission, Harney

dispatched U.S. troops, including Captain George Pickett, to San Juan Island in the Puget Sound in 1859, causing a confrontation with Great Britain. Commander of the Army Winfield Scott was horrified and relieved Harney, and reassigning him to command the Department of the West, headquartered at St. Louis.¹⁴⁸

When the Civil War erupted, Harney was charged with the defense of Missouri, where secession was undecided. Harney was a Democrat and a slave owner from a slave state, but remained loyal to the Union. He was captured near Harper's Ferry, Virginia on April 21, and his Rebel captors tried to convince him to serve the Confederacy. Harney refused, was released, and returned to his post in Missouri. There he signed an agreement to allow Volunteer Major General Sterling Price, who commanded the civilian troops of the state and who claimed to oppose secession, to make all decisions applying to the state of Missouri. Harney's motivation for this was honorable; he believed Price would stay loyal to the Union. However, Price and his troops threw in with the Rebels at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, gaining Price two stars in the Confederate army.¹⁴⁹

Harney's misstep gave his enemies, which were legion, all the ammunition they needed. The old soldier was relieved of command. When he remained without an assignment in 1863, William Selby Harney retired after forty-five years of faithful service to his beloved U.S. army. He had a parting shot for those who had brought him down. "[I have been] ... relieved of command in a manner that has inflicted unmerited disgrace upon a true and loyal soldier ... my countrymen will be slow to believe that I have chosen this portion of my career to damn with treason my life."¹⁵⁰

But that was not the end for Mad Bear Harney. The U.S. government called on him to negotiate with his old enemies, the Plains Indians, at the 1865 Treaty of the Little Arkansas, the 1867 Medicine Lodge Treaty, and the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie. Ironically, at these peace talks Harney was a defender of the Indians, who respected him greatly. Harney opposed the conversion of Indians to Christianity as well as their "civilization." In fact, the Indians commented that Harney was the only white man they knew and could talk to at the treaty negotiations. He went into full retirement in 1869 and died twenty years later at age 89, fittingly in his old stomping grounds of Florida, in Orlando.¹⁵¹

With even a passing knowledge of Union General John Buford's personality and character, the similarity between Harney and his former subordinate is obvious. John Buford learned many things from Harney in those nine years on the frontier that would help to mold him -- and possibly affected some of his decisions at Gettysburg. Most obvious was Buford's willingness, like his old commander, to take action and the initiative first and ask questions later. His decision to hold the Rebels at Gettysburg on June 30 and July 1, 1863, stands as one of the great examples of moral courage and initiative in American military history.

Like Harney, Buford was a "soldiers' soldier" and a superb horseman. His friend, Union General John Gibbon, commented that Buford was the best rider in the country. Another fellow officer called him "the soldier par excellence." Buford, like Harney, hated with equal enthusiasm civilians, spies, and guerrillas. He hung at least two spies during the Gettysburg campaign. On one of the corpses he placed a sign that said, "This man is to hang three days, he who cuts him down shall hang the remaining time." Recalling Harney's treatment of the San Patricio Battalion, Buford had learned that a brutal example, especially a hangman's noose, best makes one's point.¹⁵²

Buford's contempt for bungling at the high command level is well documented, and like his mentor, he was not shy about speaking up about it. He testified at Fitz-John Porter's court-martial. His testimony indicated that both Porter and Army Commander John Pope had ignored Buford's reports of Longstreet's movement against Pope's left at 2nd Manassas, which played a big role in the Union defeat there.¹⁵³ Buford also railed at the high command of the Army of the Potomac in August of 1863. He wrote the following explosive dispatch to his superior, Alfred Pleasonton, perhaps the angriest dispatch in all of *The Official Records*:

I am disgusted and worn out with the system that seems to prevail. There is so much apathy and so little disposition to fight and cooperate that I wish to be relieved from the Army of the Potomac. ... I am willing to serve my country, but do not wish to sacrifice the brave men under my command.¹⁵⁴

Buford's most famous statement alone demonstrated his no-nonsense, cynical nature. At Gettysburg on the morning of July 1, 1863, General John Reynolds upon arriving on the field, asked Buford how things were going. Buford's reply is now legendary: "The Devil's to pay!" Later in the day when both major generals Oliver O. Howard and Abner Doubleday were commanding on the field, Buford reported to his superiors: "... there seems to be no directing person ... for God's sake send up Hancock ... we need a controlling spirit." Buford, in true Harney style, was mincing no words when it came to his opinion of Howard and Doubleday.¹⁵⁵

Finally, Buford stayed loyal to the Union as Harney had. Like his old colonel, Buford was born and raised in a slave state, Kentucky. He also had a black servant accompanying him, probably a slave, named Edward. Harney also had a slave with him in Florida. It is possible that Buford's decision to remain in the U.S. army was based in part on the example of his old commander.¹⁵⁶

Another factor in Buford's decision to stay with the Union may have been Harney's replacement in 1858 as colonel of the 2nd Dragoons, Philip St. George Cooke. St. George Cooke, who many cavalry historians consider the true father of American cavalry, was every bit as tough, flinty, and hard-boiled as Harney. He was a native of Virginia, and his son-in-law J.E.B. Stuart threw in with the Confederacy. In 1861 St. George Cooke stated, "I owe Virginia nothing, I owe my country everything," and decided on the Union.¹⁵⁷

Colonel St. George Cooke, Captain Buford, and Captain John Gibbon (appointed to West Point from North Carolina) were stationed together near Salt Lake City, Utah at Fort Crittenden in April 1861. It was here that Buford was offered a major general's commission in the Confederate army by the governor of Kentucky. He replied in true 2nd Dragoon fashion that Harney or St. George Cooke would have been proud of, "I sent him [the governor] word I was a Captain in the United States Army and I intend to remain one!"¹⁵⁸

John Buford was his own man, but the similarities between his personality and William S. Harney (as well as the hard-boiled St. George Cooke) are too obvious to ignore. Without his experience under these two legends, John Buford may well have been wearing gray at Gettysburg. Without Buford, it is easy to imagine that Meade's army would not have fared as well in that decisive battle. Buford, like his old colonel, distrusted high command, acted first, and asked questions later.

Scott and the "Aztec Club" in Mexico

Some would argue that it was not Mahan, West Point, Jomini, or Napoleon that had the biggest influence on the leaders of the American Civil War. Many point to Commanding General of the Army Winfield Scott and his victory in the Mexican War as the key to understanding the way in which the later conflict was fought. While I do not retract my thesis, Scott and the war with Mexico did play a significant role in shaping the tactics used thirteen years later. There are numerous biographies of Winfield Scott and studies of the Mexican War, and again I wish more space were available for a detailed study. But a few things that may have affected the Battle of Gettysburg are worth briefly mentioning.

The most important effect that Scott's Mexican campaign had on the Civil War is obvious. America was victorious in a relatively short war where it had invaded a foreign country, defeated a numerically superior enemy on his own soil, and gained almost two million square miles of territory, or one-third of the landmass of the present continental United States. The Duke of

Wellington was so impressed with Scott afterward that he proclaimed him “the greatest living soldier.” The argument could be made that in no war in American history has the U.S. army performed as competently and gained more materially for its country than in the Mexican War.¹⁵⁹

What this meant in the end was that Mahan’s emphasis on Jomini and Napoleon at West Point had been vindicated. West Point was forever safe from being abolished. The majority of Scott’s junior officers had been graduates who would in turn lead the two armies of the Civil War. One hundred-thirty officers who served under Scott in Mexico became generals between 1861 and 1865. They called themselves “the Aztec Club.” This was a formal organization founded in October 1847 at Mexico City. Gettysburg leaders who served with Scott in 1847 (although not necessarily members of “the Aztec Club”) were Lee, Archer, Armistead, Ewell, Johnson, Longstreet, Pickett, Wilcox, Fry, Barnes, Robinson, Geary, Hancock, William Hays, Hunt, Paul, Sedgwick, Sykes, and Seth Williams.¹⁶⁰

There were many other Gettysburg and Civil War leaders who served in the Mexican War. However, they served in campaigns other than Scott’s 1847 march from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, such as S.W. Kearny’s California expedition or Taylor’s 1846 battles in northern Mexico.

Scott was not a West Pointer, but he certainly was one of the academy’s biggest supporters and frequent visitors. It could safely be stated that he helped save West Point from its enemies and loved the academy as much as any graduate. He was buried there in 1866 at his own request.¹⁶¹

If we examine Scott’s advance from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, the influence of Jomini is evident. His aggressive frontal assaults combined with “turning movements” is certainly right out of *Art of War*. And Scott’s humane treatment of Mexican civilians, which limited enemy guerrilla action, is in line with Jomini’s caution, “... invasion against an exasperated people is a dangerous enterprise ... [the invader must] calm the popular passions in every possible way ... display courtesy, gentleness, and severity united, and particularly deal justly.”¹⁶²

One of Scott’s biographers, Timothy Johnson, best sums up the Jomini-through-Scott influence:

Because the Civil War had many Napoleonic characteristics ... Herman Hattaway and Archer Jones [authors of *How the North Won*] have written that its commanders were either “conscious or unconscious disciples of Jomini’s strategy.” ... Certainly many of the “unconscious disciples” owe much of their command style to Winfield Scott who was a “conscious” follower, one could say master, of Jominian (Napoleonic) strategy.¹⁶³

Of course, Winfield Scott’s largest influence on the Gettysburg campaign was in the form of Robert E. Lee. Lee was the aggressor in the battle and the campaign. He called the shots while Joe Hooker and George Meade simply reacted. Most historians agree that Lee was -- consciously or unconsciously -- a disciple of Winfield Scott.

Lee was an intimate of Scott for eleven months (March 1847 to February 1848) as a topographical engineer on Scott’s staff in what was called “the little cabinet.” Included in this group were chief engineer Colonel Joseph Totten, inspector general Lt. Colonel E.A. Hitchcock, and military secretary Captain Henry Scott (no relation). Lee’s brilliant reconnaissances at Cerro Gordo, Padierna, Churubusco, and Chapultepec contributed greatly to the U.S. victories there and are large part of the Lee legend. His performance in Mexico drew the highest praise from Scott who in 1858 called Lee, “the very best soldier that I ever saw in the field.” Although still debated by historians, it is believed by many that Scott offered field command of the U.S. army to Lee in February 1861.¹⁶⁴

There can be no doubt that there was a mutual admiration between Lee and Scott. Lee wrote of his commander in Mexico:

The great cause of our success was in our leader. It was his stout heart that cast us on the shore of Vera Cruz, his bold self-reliance that forced us through the pass at Cerro Gordo; his indomitable courage that ... pressed us forward to [Mexico City], and finally brought us within its gates ...¹⁶⁵

Douglas Southall Freeman in his epic four-volume biography of Lee outlined what were in his opinion the seven lessons Lee learned under Scott in Mexico. Freeman felt that these lessons “were the basis of virtually all he attempted to do” in the Civil War.

1. “Lee was inspired to audacity. This was, perhaps, his greatest strategical lesson in Mexico. ... [Lee] received his practical instruction ... under as daring a soldier as Scott, and followed by a study of Napoleon, it will not be surprising that audacity ... was [Lee’s] guiding principle ...”
2. “It is not the function of the commanding general to fight the battle in detail.”
3. “Working with a trained staff, Lee saw its value in the development of a strategical plan.”
4. “The relation of careful reconnaissance to sound strategy was impressed on Lee ...”
5. “Lee saw in Mexico the strategic possibilities of flank movements.”
6. “[Lee] saw Scott ... boldly abandon his line of supply. ... It is quite possible that this experience was one reason [for the 1862 Maryland and 1863 Pennsylvania campaigns].”
7. “Lee acquired in Mexico an appreciation of the value of fortifications.”¹⁶⁶

Again, if we examine Lee’s actions from June 3 to July 14, 1863, the straight line from Napoleon to Jomini to Scott can be seen. Lee’s whole campaign in general, and the Battle of Gettysburg in particular, was one of aggressive, perhaps overconfident, audacity. Lee, to the chagrin of Southern sympathizers to this day, did not fight the battle in detail. Entire forests of trees have perished in the last 139 years criticizing Lee’s lack of supervision in the battle. Certainly his plan of July 2 called for a tactical flanking movement. Lee did use extensive fortifications at Falling Waters and Williamsport, Maryland during his retreat into Virginia. Finally, Lee’s orders to his soldiers to conduct themselves in a civilized manner during the campaign recalled Scott’s quote concerning Mexico, “I carried on the war as a Christian, and not as a fiend.”¹⁶⁷

Lee, on the other hand, has been criticized for violating these rules or lessons by not conducting proper reconnaissance in the Battle of Gettysburg. This lack of proper scouting is mysterious when one considers Lee’s performance in Mexico. Also, it is debatable whether Lee’s staff was properly trained. Certainly, no one has ever referred to his staff as “the little cabinet.”

Conclusion

There is no doubt in my mind that few, if any, of the key leaders in the Battle of Gettysburg stood on the field and asked themselves, “What would Mahan, Jomini, Napoleon, Scott, or old Colonel So and So do now?” But I absolutely believe that for most of these combat leaders the die was already cast because of their almost uniform experience of West Point, Mahan, and the Old Army. The tactical theories, training, and habits acquired by these men before the Civil War were ingrained in their subconscious. Under stress they, as all humans will, fell back on their prior experiences and training to solve the problems that presented themselves on the battlefield. I do not know of another war in recorded history where the leaders on the opposing sides had such a uniform background. That common background, I believe, is *the defining characteristic* of the American Civil War, and not the political, sectional, cultural, economic, or other military analysis that dominates most Civil War scholarship.

If you talk to any former combat arms officer, he will tell you that old habits die hard. As he drives down a peaceful American highway his eyes automatically, unconsciously, analyze the

terrain. Where would I place my automatic weapons and troops? How would I attack or defend that hill? On what terrain feature would I pre-plan artillery fire? It does not matter that decades have passed since he actually was in the field leading troops, it still happens in the subconscious. The combat leaders at Gettysburg were no different. Their past experience and training automatically kicked in.

So how does one explain why, despite their common background, that some Civil War officers were brilliant, some competent, and some incompetent? West Point and the pre-war army produced Lee, Grant, Sherman, and Jackson – but they also produced Howard, Burnside, Bragg, and for that matter, Jefferson Davis.

One of the myths of the war is that the Confederacy had better generals. The facts do not bear this out. The Confederacy may have had Lee and Jackson, but they also had Bragg and Pendleton. At the outbreak of the war, many of the high ranking officers in the Union army, such as Scott, Wool, Harney, and Sumner, were more than sixty years old, which certainly hindered the effectiveness of the army. The Union had to wait until younger officers, such as Grant and Sherman could prove themselves. These men and others proved a match for Confederate leadership, and often bettered it, particularly in the western theater of the war.

Military leadership, despite the recent spate of ludicrous books such as *Lee or Grant for Businessmen*, is markedly different from other types of leadership. It is infinitely more difficult and deadly. Not everyone has what it takes. Individual characteristics played a huge role in the ability of these leaders to use their common experience of West Point, Mahan, and the Old Army to achieve success as a combat leader.

There is no set formula that will determine who will or will not be a successful combat leader. Lee and Grant were complete opposites personally, yet both are considered great generals. McClellan's character and career path should have guaranteed greatness, but didn't. Jackson's individual traits certainly did not preview his future success.

The only thing we know for sure is that almost all the leaders in the Civil War and on the field at Gettysburg had the same background, which could not help but influence their psyches. Why some of these combat leaders with identical backgrounds were better than others is an interesting question, one that I'm sure will never be fully answered.

I will let Professor Dennis Hart Mahan have the final word on the subject, "No man [must] be so rash as to assume that, in donning a general's uniform, he is forthwith competent to perform a general's functions."¹⁶⁸

Postscript: Emory Upton and the Birth of the Modern U.S. Army

A visitor to the Gettysburg National Military Park can be overwhelmed by the more than 1,350 stone, marble, and bronze monuments that dot the field. Most of the big names and heroes (except, sadly, George Sykes) have statues or busts in honor of their accomplishments in the battle and the war. Licensed battlefield guides stop at many of these monuments in the course of their tours. The Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania monuments are favorites. Rarely, however, do the guides or visitors stop at the monument to the 121st New York Infantry Regiment. When one drives north on Sykes Avenue from the Little Round Top parking lot, it is on the left, 100 yards down the northern slope of the hill. I always try to stop there, because on the monument, under the impressive bronze statue of a standing Union infantryman gripping his rifle, is a bust of the colonel of the regiment at Gettysburg. This bust depicts the father of modern U.S. army: Emory Upton.

Of all of the officers on the field of Gettysburg, Colonel Emory Upton had the biggest effect on the U.S. army of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, when America rose from the backwater to its status as the world's foremost military power. As was mentioned earlier, the modern U.S. army has adapted much of the Prussian military system, while abandoning the Napoleonic system

that so dominated the psyche of the nineteenth-century American military. Emory Upton was the primary reason for this reform.



Emory Upton as a brigadier general. NA

Emory Upton, a native of Batavia, New York, graduated fifth in his class at West Point in May 1861. While at the academy he, of course, studied under Mahan and read Henry Halleck's *The Elements of Military Art and Science*, which defended the U.S. regular army and was anti-militia. Upton agreed with Halleck's assessment.¹⁶⁹

Upton was commissioned into the 5th U.S. Artillery at the outset of the Civil War, where he performed well in the 1862 Peninsula and Maryland campaigns. He commanded an artillery brigade as a lieutenant. He was appointed colonel of the 121st New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment in October 1862. The twenty-four-year-old colonel was a strict disciplinarian, a visionary thinker, a fanatically hard worker, an ardent abolitionist, a deeply religious man, dour, brave, and very ambitious. He wanted badly to be a high-ranking general. He weeded out incompetent officers and trained the 121st New York to such a high degree that they acquired the nickname "Upton's Regulars."¹⁷⁰

In his first infantry fight, at Fredericksburg, Virginia on May 3, 1863, Upton led his regiment in a direct frontal assault against the Rebels. He lost 60 percent of his men. As Upton's biographer Stephen Ambrose points out:

Never again did Upton attempt a frontal, daytime assault until careful preparations had been made. ... Upton learned to appreciate and thus fear the power of nineteenth-century weaponry; in the postwar period one of his major contributions would be a new system of tactics (based on a strong skirmish line), an open order, and advance by rushes instead of direct linear assault.¹⁷¹

Upton temporarily commanded his brigade at Gettysburg. Although not engaged in the battle, he did earn a reputation on the march to the battlefield by firing on stragglers to motivate the non-stragglers. On November 7, 1863, Colonel Upton led his brigade on a wildly successful night assault using only bayonets at Rappahannock Station, Virginia.¹⁷²

Upton became convinced that the French-style linear attack formation was obsolete in the era of the rifled musket and Minié ball. His solution was a surprise attack in column that would be mounted close to the enemy's lines with little or no artillery preparation. Surprise and speed were the key. The disadvantage was that in column, there would not be the firepower that linear tactics provided.

Upton's appointment with destiny came on May 10, 1864 at Spotsylvania, Virginia. He was given twelve of the best regiments of the Union 6th Corps and ordered by his division commander, David Russell, to utilize his column tactics to pierce the strong Confederate entrenchments on the western side of what would forever be known as the Bloody Angle. Russell

informed the colonel that if the assault succeeded, a brigadier general's star would be the reward. The attack was initially a success, but Upton had been promised reinforcements and support on his left, which never materialized. Upton withdrew after heavy losses.¹⁷³

Despite his disappointment, Upton had his general's star and General Grant was so encouraged by Upton's tactics that he ordered a pre-dawn column attack by an entire corps supported by another on May 12. This assault initially broke the Rebel lines at the Bloody Angle, but then bogged down into eighteen hours of some of the most vicious carnage of the war. There would be no decisive Union breakthrough, but Emory Upton's name was now known at the highest levels of command.¹⁷⁴

After the disastrous slaughter of Cold Harbor, General Upton raged, "I have seen but little generalship during the campaign. Some of our corps commanders are not fit to be corporals."¹⁷⁵

At Opequon Creek in the Shenandoah Valley on September 19, 1864, David Russell was killed in action, and Upton took over the division. He was then badly wounded, his femoral artery cut by shrapnel. Despite being ordered to the rear by General Phil Sheridan, Upton had his leg bound by a tourniquet and stayed in command carried on a stretcher. He earned his second star by brevet.¹⁷⁶

Due to his friendship with Union General James Wilson, Upton took command of one of Wilson's cavalry divisions in the western theater after recovering from his wound. He led his troopers with distinction in Wilson's 1865 raid through Alabama and Georgia.¹⁷⁷ When the war ended Upton had risen from second lieutenant to major general in four years, commanding large units in all three combat arms. He was twenty-six. Few men in the Civil War had risen so high so quickly.

In the reorganization of the army in 1866, Upton was appointed lieutenant colonel of the 25th U.S. Infantry. Since the war had ended he had been working on a manual for a new system of infantry tactics. He advocated small units and divided regiments and companies into four-man units that would eventually be called squads. These squads would fight in columns or a single strong skirmish line advancing by rushes. To Upton, the French linear system of two and three lines was obsolete. The small-unit tactics of the modern U.S. army. On August 1, 1867, General U.S. Grant ordered the army to adopt Upton's *Infantry Tactics*.¹⁷⁸

In 1870, Lieutenant Colonel Upton began a five-year assignment as the commandant of cadets at West Point. In Europe, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 proved to him once and for all the obsolescence of the French system and began his love affair with the Prussians. In 1875 and 1876 Upton traveled overseas at army expense to study the military systems of Japan, China, India, Russia, Italy, France, England, and Germany. The result was his classic treatise *The Armies of Europe and Asia*. The message of this book was simple. The Prussian military system, which had united Germany in 1871 with victories over Denmark, Austria, and France, was superior and thus should be adapted by the United States.¹⁷⁹

The Prussians had a small elite regular army, which was supplemented by a huge well-trained militia called the Landwehr. The Prussian general staff, led by Field Marshall Von Moltke, was the best of its kind in the world in terms of organization. Finally, most of Prussia's budget went to the army, which was the opposite of America's peacetime army. The bottom line was that the Prussians utilized better tactics and weapons than the Americans, and possessed a much more efficient staff and educational system for their officer corps.¹⁸⁰

In 1878 a joint committee of two U.S. senators and four U.S. congressmen, headed by Senator Ambrose Burnside, met to discuss reformation of the army. Commander of the Army Sherman recommended Upton's book as the basis of that reform. Everyone on the committee favored Upton. There was only one dissenting witness, one of the biggest heroes of Gettysburg, Major General Winfield Hancock. He disagreed with Upton's beliefs. The "Burnside Bill" for military reform was defeated in Congress in 1879. Upton did not give up and began writing *The Military Policy of the United States*, which attacked the existing system and advocated his own Prussian-

influenced construct. The influence of Halleck can be obviously seen in this work. Still, to his disgust, the army ignored Upton's proposals.¹⁸¹

On March 14, 1881, Colonel Emory Upton shot himself at his post at the Presidio of San Francisco, California. Was it frustration at the army, general depression (he had never been the same after his wife died in 1869), religious dementia (he spoke constantly of "seeing heaven"), a physical ailment (he suffered from painful headaches), or a combination? We will never know. Sadly, a brilliant military career had come to a tragic end.¹⁸²

Fortunately the story does not end there. Upton's old West Point classmate and friend Henry Dupont gave the unfinished *Military Policy* to West Point professor Peter Michie. Michie then published *The Life and Letters of Emory Upton* in 1885. In 1903, in part due to the poor showing of the U.S. army in the Spanish-American War, Secretary of War Elihu Root became interested in reforming the army. He read Michie's and Upton's books and had the War Department publish *Military Policy* a year later. Shortly thereafter, the army adopted the "Root reforms." These reforms were heavily influenced by Upton's writings. Many of them remain to this day.¹⁸³ (The army also adopted the Prussian haircut. There were to be no more Civil War era long hair, beards, or sideburns. The short "buzz -cut" that soldiers sport today has nothing to do with cleanliness and are not traditionally military in this country. The short military haircut hair is simply a Prussian fashion statement.)¹⁸⁴

Of all the men who fought at Gettysburg, it was the now-obscure Colonel Emory Upton who is the father of the modern U.S. army. It is sad that he never lived to see it. The next time you drive down the northern slope of Little Round Top, stop at the 121st New York Infantry Monument and take a moment to thank him.

"When he killed himself he was certain he was a failure. He was wrong. Emory Upton both symbolized and helped preserve the best in the army."¹⁸⁵

Stephen E. Ambrose

I would like to express my gratitude to Susan Lintelman of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point's Special Collections and Archives, and to my friend Wayne Motts, licensed battlefield guide at Gettysburg National Military Park, both of whom greatly assisted me in this project.

I dedicate this essay to the men who spurned ambition and fame and turned down volunteer commissions offered in the Civil War to command the companies, batteries, battalions, and regiments of the United States Army. They are more than just obscure names on the nondescript regular army monuments that dot the Gettysburg National Military Park. I realize, sadly, that to the general public, they will remain forgotten. I realize that George Sykes or Romeyn Ayres will probably never be honored with a bronze statue on the field, despite the fact that Abner Doubleday, James Wadsworth, Samuel Crawford, and Oliver O. Howard have been so honored. I, however, will not forget.

Notes

¹ James L. Morrison, Jr., *The Best School in the World: West Point, The Pre-Civil War Years 1833-1866* (Kent, OH: Kent State University, Press, 1986), 153.

² Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Gray* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 1-350; Ezra J. Warner, *Generals in Blue* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), 1-577. I will not dwell on Sickles' role at Gettysburg. Love him or hate him, hero or fool, the former congressman and murderer had a major effect on the battle because of his controversial placement of his 3rd Army Corps on July 2, 1863. Most condemn his actions. Some, including high-ranking Confederate officers at Gettysburg, say Sickles was right. I will only state this: right or wrong, no West Pointer or regular army veteran would have done what Sickles did on that day. Dan Sickles only reinforces my thesis about West Point.

Thirteen of the twenty-two Union division commanders (59 percent) in the Army of the Potomac at Gettysburg attended West Point. What is interesting is the distribution of Meade's West Point-trained infantry division commanders. Of the eleven infantry divisions who had their origins in George McClellan's Peninsula campaign Army of the Potomac (the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th corps), eight were commanded by academy grads. However, in the three infantry corps were originally part of John Pope's Army of Virginia (the 1st, 11th, and 12th corps) only one of eight division commanders had graduated from the USMA. (All three Union cavalry division commanders were academy men.) This odd distribution could be coincidence. It is possible that McClellan, who was a huge advocate of West Point and notoriously distrustful of volunteers, was responsible for this.

³ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 180, 234; Morrison, *Best School*, 94.

⁴ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 180; Thomas Everett Greiss, "Dennis Hart Mahan: West Point Professor and Advocate of Military Professionalism, 1830-1871," Ph.D Dissertation, Duke University, 1968, 246.

⁵ Greiss, "Mahan," 3-4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 104-12; Editors of Combined Books, *The Civil War Book of Lists* (Coshohocken, PA: Combined Books, 1989), 115-116.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 341, 119-124.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 125-132.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹² Dennis Hart Mahan, *Treatise on the Advanced-Guard, Out-post and the Detachment Service of Troops* (New York, NY: John Wiley, 1861), 30.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁵ Greiss, "Mahan," 335-336.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 132-136.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 341-342; George Cullum, "Dennis H. Mahan," Obituary in USMA's 1871 *Annual Reunion*, 18-25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 18-25; John C. Waugh, *The Class of 1846* (New York, NY: Time Warner Books, 1994), 64.

¹⁹ Greiss, "Mahan," 153.

²⁰ Waugh, *1846*, 66.

²¹ Mahan, *OutPost*, 32-33.

²² *Ibid.*, 7.

²³ Waugh, *1846*, 64.

²⁴ Morrison, *Best School*, 94-95.

²⁵ Waugh, *1846*, 65.

²⁶ Morrison, *Best School*, 114-125.

²⁷ Greiss, "Mahan," 135-170, 209-219.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 165-175.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 287-330.

³⁰ Author's general knowledge of the battle of Waterloo.

³¹ Warner, *Generals in Gray*, 1-350; Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 1-577. A.A. Humphreys graduated from USMA in 1831 and did study under Mahan before he was a full professor in 1832.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Cullum, "Mahan," 18-25.

³⁴ Greiss, "Mahan," 249-286.

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- ³⁵ Ibid., 305.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 252-253.
- ³⁷ Warner, *Generals in Blue*, xix.
- ³⁸ Mahan, *Outpost*, 33.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Percentage arrived by comparing regular army and volunteer regimental returns.
- ⁴¹ Mahan, *Outpost*, 198-202.
- ⁴² Ibid., 51.
- ⁴³ Dennis Hart Mahan, *A Complete Treatise on Field Fortifications* (New York, NY: John Wiley, 1836), 9-10.
- ⁴⁴ Mahan, *Outpost*, 48-56.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 71.
- ⁴⁶ Douglas Southall Freeman, *R. E. Lee A Biography*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935-1936), 89-90.
- ⁴⁷ Mahan, *Outpost*, 29-31.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 56-60.
- ⁴⁹ Morrison, *Best School*, 96.
- ⁵⁰ Greiss, "Mahan," 237-239.
- ⁵¹ Baron De Jomini, *Summary of the Art of War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1862), introduction.
- ⁵² Grady McWhiney and Perry D. Jamieson, *Attack and Die* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1982), 46.
- ⁵³ Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 195-197.
- ⁵⁴ Jomini, *Art of War*, 15.
- ⁵⁵ Freeman, *R. E. Lee*, 19-25.
- ⁵⁶ Jomini, *The Art of War*, 21.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ Morrison, *Best School*, 328.
- ⁵⁹ Jomini, *Art of War*.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Michael Phipps, "Indian Fighters at Gettysburg," *Battlefield Dispatch*, Newsletter of the Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides (Gettysburg, PA: September 1995).
- ⁶³ David G. Chandler, ed., *The Military Maxims of Napoleon* (New York, NY: MacMillan Press, 1987), 14.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid., 15.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., 13.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., 15.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid., 57.
- ⁶⁸ Morrison, *Best School*, 96.
- ⁶⁹ Morrison, *Best School*, 96.
- ⁷⁰ Paddy Griffith, *Battle Tactics of the Civil War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 21-22.
- ⁷¹ Ibid., 191.
- ⁷² Ibid., 9.
- ⁷³ Edward Hagerman, *American Civil War and the Origins of Modern Warfare* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 7, 16.
- ⁷⁴ McWhiney and Jamieson, *Attack and Die*, 49-50.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid., 49-52.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 57-58.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., 63-67.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid., 56-57.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., 196.
- ⁸⁰ Freeman, *R. E. Lee*, v. I, 218-300, 365-367.
- ⁸¹ Ibid.; Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 315-316.
- ⁸² Ibid., 429-430, 573-574.
- ⁸³ Above based on the author's experience as an army officer between 1979-1987.

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- ⁸⁴ Edward Coffman, *The Old Army A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime 1784-1898* (New York, NY), 46-47, 60; Warner, *Generals in Blue*, xxi.
- ⁸⁵ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 45.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid., 49. Modern ranks from author's experiences.
- ⁸⁷ Francis Hietman, *Historical Register of the United States Army* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1903), 625.
- ⁸⁸ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 57.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid., 49.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., 60.
- ⁹¹ Ibid., 54.
- ⁹² Warner, *Generals in Blue*, 316; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 50-52; James I. Robertson, *General A. P. Hill*, (New York, NY: Random House, 1987), 21-22.
- ⁹³ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 58; Timothy J. Reese, *Sykes Regular Infantry Division 1861-1864* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 1990), 5.
- ⁹⁴ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 81.
- ⁹⁵ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 81, 67.
- ⁹⁶ James I. Robertson, *General A. P. Hill* (New York, NY: Random House, 1987), 23.
- ⁹⁷ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 62.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 66; James I. Roberston, *Stonewall Jackson* (New York: NY Random House, 1997), 99-109.
- ⁹⁹ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 63-65.
- ¹⁰⁰ William B. Skelton, *The American Profession of Arms the Army Officer Corps 1784-1861* (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1997), 238-252.
- ¹⁰¹ Robertson, *A.P. Hill*, 21.
- ¹⁰² George Crook (Autobiography 1852-1856) Crook-Kennon Papers USAMHI, Carlisle, PA, 4.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid., 4-7.
- ¹⁰⁴ Phipps, *Indian Fighters*.
- ¹⁰⁵ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 73-77.
- ¹⁰⁶ Michael Phipps, "The Officer Corps of the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry During the Battle of Gettysburg," Gettysburg National Military Park, *Mr. Lincoln's Army: The Army of the Potomac in the Gettysburg Campaign* (Gettysburg, PA: Gettysburg National Military Park, 1997), 106.
- ¹⁰⁷ Phipps, *Indian Fighters*; Coffman, *The Old Army*, 78.
- ¹⁰⁸ George Seldes, *The Great Thoughts* (New York, NY: Scribner's, 1985), 218.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 142.
- ¹¹⁰ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 138-139.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., 202-203.
- ¹¹² Skelton, *American Profession*, 162
- ¹¹³ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 193-197.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid., 157.
- ¹¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁶ All information from Heitman, *Historical Register*.
- ¹¹⁷ Ed Longacre, *Pickett: Leader of the Charge* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Publishing, 1996), 26.
- ¹¹⁸ Information provided by Gettysburg National Military Park historian D. Scott Hartwig.
- ¹¹⁹ Michael Phipps and John Peterson, *The Devil's To Pay: General John Buford, USA* (Gettysburg, PA: Farnsworth House Military Impressions, 1995), 14-16; Michael Phipps "History of the U.S. Cavalry," unpublished manuscript, page 41.
- ¹²⁰ Phipps and Peterson, *The Devil's To Pay*, 37-38.
- ¹²¹ Phipps and Peterson, *The Devil's To Pay*, 43.
- ¹²² Ibid., 40-46.
- ¹²³ Phipps, "History of the U.S. Cavalry," 55.
- ¹²⁴ Ibid., 57.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid.
- ¹²⁶ Samuel P. Bates, *The Battle of Gettysburg* (Philadelphia, PA: T. H. Davis and Company, 1875), 55.
- ¹²⁷ Phipps, *The Devil's To Pay*, forward.
- ¹²⁸ Heitman, *Historical Register*, v. I, 1-1069.
- ¹²⁹ Richmond Clow, "William S. Harney," in Paul Andrew Hutton, ed., *Soldier's West* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 42.

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- ¹³⁰ Ibid., 43.
- ¹³¹ Ibid., 45.
- ¹³² Phipps, "History of the Cavalry," 48.
- ¹³³ Ibid.
- ¹³⁴ Ibid.
- ¹³⁵ Clow, "Harney," 45.
- ¹³⁶ Phipps, "History of the Cavalry," 49.
- ¹³⁷ Phipps, "The Officer Corps," 96.
- ¹³⁸ Phipps, "History of the Cavalry," 49.
- ¹³⁹ Clow, "Harney," 45.
- ¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 46-47.
- ¹⁴¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁴² Ibid.
- ¹⁴³ Ibid., 48.
- ¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 49-50.
- ¹⁴⁵ Phipps, *The Devil's To Pay*, 14-16.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 16.
- ¹⁴⁷ Clow, "Harney," 54.
- ¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 50-52.
- ¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 53-54.
- ¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 54.
- ¹⁵¹ Ibid., 54-56.
- ¹⁵² Phipps, *The Devil's To Pay*, 4, 8, 18. There are only two biographies of Buford. One is, Michael Phipps and John Peterson, *The Devil's To Pay: General John Buford, USA* (Gettysburg, PA: Farnsworth House Military Impressions, 1995). The other is Edward Longacre, *General John Buford, A Military Biography* (Conshohocken, PA: Combined Books, 1995).
- ¹⁵³ Ibid., 26-27.
- ¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 57.
- ¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 49-52.
- ¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 62; Clow, "Harney," 45.
- ¹⁵⁷ Phipps, "The Officer Corps," 97.
- ¹⁵⁸ Phipps, *The Devil's To Pay*, 19.
- ¹⁵⁹ Timothy D. Johnson, *Winfield Scott: The Quest For Glory* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 7.
- ¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 234, 289-290.
- ¹⁶¹ Ibid., 241.
- ¹⁶² Ibid., 161.
- ¹⁶³ Ibid., 234.
- ¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 175; Freeman, *R. E. Lee*, v. 1, 294.
- ¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 280.
- ¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 295-297.
- ¹⁶⁷ Johnson, *Scott*, 169.
- ¹⁶⁸ Greiss, "Mahan," 351.
- ¹⁶⁹ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Upton and the Army* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University, 1964), 4, 11, 15.
- ¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 15-21.
- ¹⁷¹ Ibid., 22.
- ¹⁷² Ibid., 24.
- ¹⁷³ Ibid., 30-31.
- ¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 177.
- ¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 37.
- ¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 40-41.
- ¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 42-50.
- ¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 56-62.
- ¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 71-111.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 90-111.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 115-116.

¹⁸² Ibid., 142-150.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 157-159.

¹⁸⁴ In 1903 the U.S. Army Grooming Regulations changed to reflect Prussian standards.

¹⁸⁵ Ambrose, *Upton*, 159.